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THE NEW-CENTURY BIBLE

THE GENERAL EPISTLES

JAMES, PETER, JOHN, AND JUDE

OXFORD

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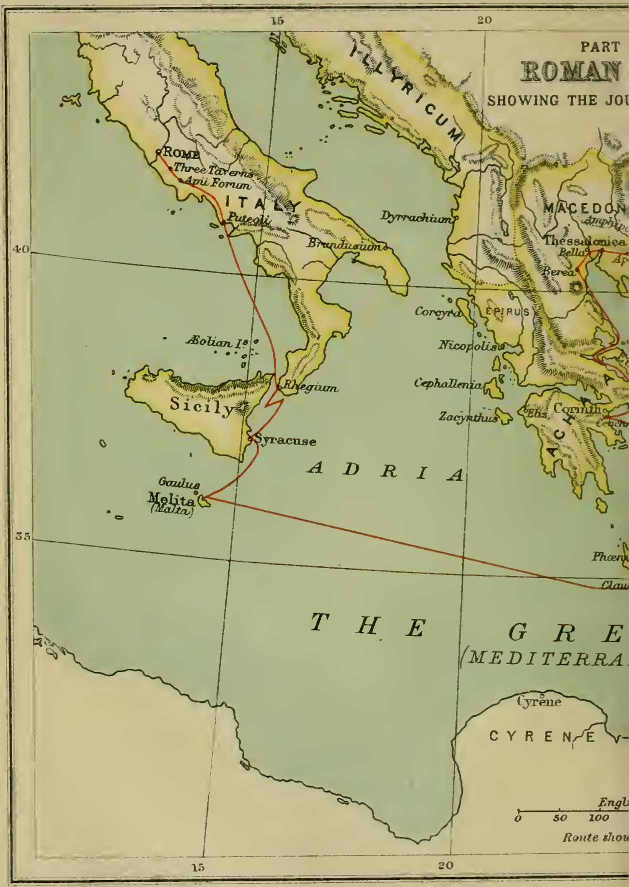
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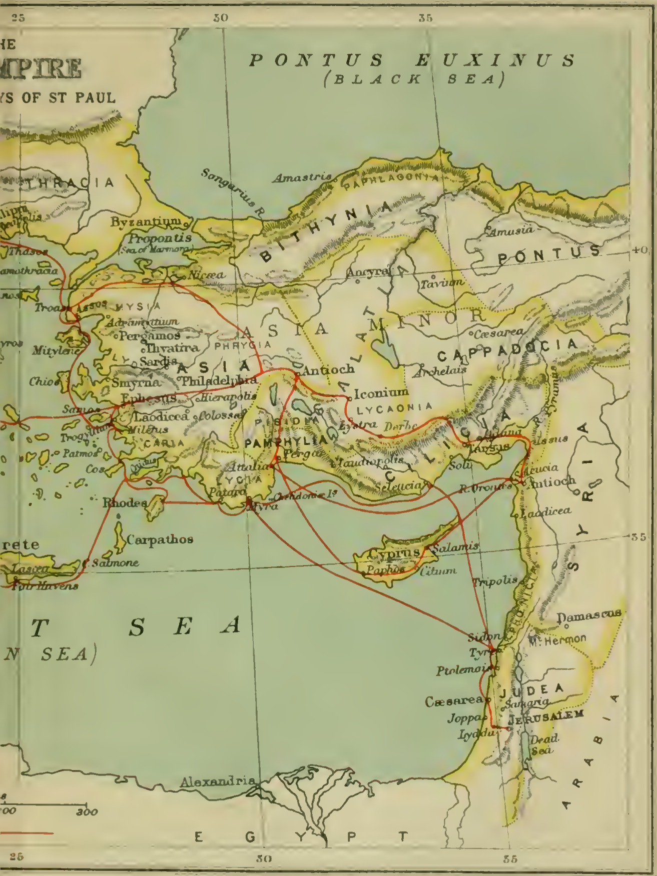
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The New-Century Bible

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The General Epistles

James, Peter, John, and Jude

INTRODUCTION
AUTHORIZED VERSION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
INDEX AND MAP

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THE GENERAL EPISTLES

JAMES; I, II PETER; I—III JOHN

AND

JUDE

INTRODUCTION

THE GENERAL EPISTLES

INTRODUCTION

Title. THE GENERAL OR CATHOLIC EPISTLES comprise James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, 1, 2, and 3 John; they are so called because some of them are addressed to Christians in *general*, or groups of churches, and not, like St. Paul's Epistles, to particular churches. The inclusion of 2 and 3 John in this group is a mere matter of convenience, as they are not *general*, but addressed to individuals or to particular churches[1]. Other less probable views are that 'Catholic' means (i) the work of the apostles generally as distinguished from the collection of Pauline Epistles; (ii) universally recognized; (iii) containing 'Catholic,' i.e. orthodox doctrine. The order in the MSS. and lists sometimes differs from that in the English Bible, which follows the oldest authorities. They are also variously placed, the most usual positions for the group being either between Acts and the Pauline Epistles, or, as in our Bibles, between the Pauline Epistles (including Hebrews) and the Apocalypse. By an exhaustive process, as neither historical nor Pauline, these Epistles naturally came to form a separate group; it is not known how early this arrangement was adopted, but the term 'Catholic' for these Epistles occurs from the time of Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D. 200) onwards. In the MSS. these Epistles always stand together, and there are separate MSS. containing either the Catholic Epistles alone, or these with the Acts.

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[1] Cf. p. 89.

B 2

Importance of the General Epistles. Later on we shall enter into various details, which will shew that the evidence as to the date and authorship of these Epistles is conflicting, that scholars are divided in their opinion, and that consequently a measure of uncertainty attaches to any conclusions on the subject. Here we shall anticipate some leading points, and shew their bearing on the value and significance of this section of the New Testament.

(i) *Signatures.* No express statements are made by the books themselves as to their dates, and in some cases none as to their authorship. The titles were not parts of the books themselves, but were added later on by unknown hands some time before A. D. 300. Apart from the titles, 1 John is anonymous; the author of 2 and 3 John simply styles himself 'the elder'; the authors of James and Jude style themselves 'James,' and 'Judas the brother of James,' respectively; 1 and 2 Peter, however, expressly name as their author Peter the apostle.

(ii) *Ambiguous names.* If the names James, John, and Judas are accepted as those of authors, they do not clearly tell us who the authors were; three Jameses, five Johns, and six Judases occur in the New Testament; various Jameses, Johns, and Judases occur in Josephus, and in the church history of the first two centuries. Most of these, of course, could not have written any of the General Epistles; but the mere name John or James no more fixed a man's identity then than Smith or Jones does now. It happens, for instance, that three distinguished Old Testament scholars of the last half of the nineteenth century were named Smith—W. R. Smith, G. A. Smith, H. P. Smith; and it is quite probable that about the close of the first century the names John and James may each have been borne by more than one distinguished teacher.

(iii) *Date and authorship.* The questions of date and authorship mutually depend on one another. If we know who wrote a book, we can fix the period within which it was written. If we can shew when it was written, we obviously know that its author must have been some one who lived at that time. 1 Peter and 1 John were certainly in circulation at the beginning of the second century, and are known to have been attributed to Peter and John respectively before its close. Jude and 2 John are known to have been in circulation and attributed to Jude and John the apostle about the middle of the second century. James was in circulation then, but its author is not named till the beginning of the third century. The first certain traces of 2 Peter and 3 John occur early in the third century, when their ascription to Peter and John is mentioned, but not fully accepted.

(iv) *Canonicity.* By the close of the fourth century 1 Peter and 1 John had been included in the New Testament by common consent, and their position has never since been challenged. In A.D. 324, Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, the most learned biblical scholar of his times, drew up a list of the various books held to be canonical, i.e. part of the New Testament, arranging them in four classes, according to the degree in which they were accepted. He placed 1 Peter and 1 John in his first class of *Homologoumena*, or books universally accepted. All the other General Epistles he placed in his second class of *Antilegomena*, or books to which objections had been raised[1]. Doubts as to 2 Peter were widespread; hesitation as to James was specially prevalent in the Western, as to Jude, 2 and 3 John in the Eastern Church. The Syrian Church especially long continued to ignore 2 Peter, Jude, 2 and 3 John. At the Reformation, Luther and others proposed to treat Eusebius' *Antilegomena* as of inferior authority, because they were not fully accepted by the primitive church. On the other hand, these Epistles have been fully accepted as canonical during many centuries, by the great bulk of the church.

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[1] *Ecclesiastical History*, Book III, ch. 25.

(v) *Present state of opinion.* To summarize the present position of critical opinion is even more difficult than to estimate the significance of available evidence; so that the following statement can only be regarded as a rough approximation, in which care has been taken not to exaggerate difficulties. There is not a complete agreement as to the date and authorship of any of these Epistles. Even in the case of James, 1 Peter, 1 John, and Jude, the scholars who deny apostolic authorship are sufficiently numerous and distinguished to prevent our speaking of such a practical consensus of opinion in its favour, as exists in the case of the longer Pauline Epistles. Nevertheless, the weight of critical opinion supports the apostolic authorship of 1 Peter, 1 John, and Jude, and in a less degree of James and 2 and 3 John. The authorship of the Johannine Epistles is sometimes ascribed to John the Presbyter. On the other hand, while there are still scholars who ascribe 2 Peter to the Apostle, the weight of opinion is decidedly against its apostolic authorship.

(vi) *Value of the Epistles.* The uncertainty as to the date and authorship affects the significance rather than the value of these books; we shall not find that they are less important than we supposed, but we may find that one or other of them is important in a different way. They are certainly documents of the first two centuries, for the most part not much later, in any case, than A.D. 100, even if they are not still earlier, and are therefore first-rate witnesses to the life and religion of the primitive church. We know so little of those two centuries that if these Epistles had disappeared we should have suffered a grievous loss of evidence for the early ecclesiastical history. Every recovery of fragments of the literature of this period—such as the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, and the *Logia* of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri—is hailed with enthusiasm, and arouses universal interest. The importance attached to these discoveries reminds us of the value of the treasures preserved for us in this section of the New Testament.

Moreover, apart from any decision as to authorship, we know that these Epistles were attributed to apostles by many distinguished Christian scholars of the third and later centuries. Hence they represent apostolic teaching as it was understood in the early church. No one would have accepted an Epistle as John's, for instance, unless its contents had been consistent with what was known of the teaching of the apostles. Even if any of these works are later than A.D. 100, they still set forth what was taught, and probably rightly taught, on the authority of the apostles at the beginning of the second century. Again, the Catholic Epistles have been accepted for centuries by the great majority of Christians as part of the Sacred Scriptures; they have been read in the public services of the church, have been the subject of voluminous comment and exposition, and have furnished texts for innumerable sermons. In other words they are recommended to our earnest and docile study by the hearts and minds and consciences of devout Christians in all ages. If we accord to them such study, their teaching will itself assert its authority over us. Who would deny the inspiration of books which first told the world that 'God is love[1],' and that God is the giver of 'every good and perfect gift[2]'?

We can, however, only make a somewhat modified use of 2 Peter as an authority for the Apostle's life, character, and teaching. We are not sure that it is the Apostle's own account of himself and his views; it may be only some one else's attempt to expound Peter's teaching.

The present state of evidence and opinion as to the other six Epistles may fairly be maintained to warrant the following practical attitude towards them, as witnesses to the history of religious life and thought. The reader has a right to treat them as apostolic for such purposes, but he should remember that no fundamental fact or doctrine of Christianity is dependent on either their early date or their apostolic authorship. The questions involved belong to those secondary matters, as to which the most earnest Christians may differ, while remaining united on all the essentials of faith.

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[1] 1 John iv. 8, 16.

[2] Jas. i. 17.

Two difficulties may be noticed. First, it may be urged that the test of canonicity in the early church was apostolic authorship, that books were included in the New Testament because they were believed to be by Peter, or James, or John. Hence it may seem that unless we are quite certain that these books were written by apostles, we have no right to include them in the Bible. But in deciding as to apostolic authorship, the church was greatly influenced by the intrinsic merits of a book; so that its favourable judgement meant quite as much that the book was worthy to be placed in the Bible and therefore might be accepted as apostolic, as that the book was apostolic and therefore canonical. Moreover, authorship in the early church was often understood very loosely; a book might be spoken of as Peter's simply because its teaching was that of Peter. Origen, for instance, expressly states that God only knows who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, but he often cites it as 'Paul[1].' There is no question as to the canonicity of these books; no one would propose to exclude an Epistle from the Bible because it turned out not to have been written by the apostle whose name it bore, and to have been published half a century later than was once supposed.

The second difficulty is that if the traditional views prove to have been mistaken, some of the books apparently claim to have been written by persons who were not their authors. This, of course, could not apply to the Johannine Epistles, which make no statement as to the name of their author, nor to James and Jude, which do not tell us which of the many Jameses and Judes are meant. But both 1 and 2 Peter are written in the name of the Apostle. Hence what seems at first sight a serious difficulty. Is not this an attempt to deceive the reader? We may be told that the reader was deceived for his own good; that the teaching of the Epistles is true and helpful; that the author feared that his readers might neglect his writings and suffer spiritual loss if he published them in his own name, and that therefore he used Peter's name in order to gain a hearing. Such reasoning does not satisfy a modern Western conscience. We find it hard to believe that Divine inspiration, and a deliberate attempt to deceive, even for a good end, can go hand in hand. Possibly, however, such a combination would not have perplexed the conscience of the ancient East. Compare, for instance, the narrative in 2 Kings vi. According to verse 19, Elisha told a deliberate falsehood, though at the time he was acting under immediate Divine inspiration in other matters. It is sometimes held that inspiration did not always raise its subjects above the level of current morality. However, such matters may safely be left to experts in systematic theology; the canonicity of these Epistles can be justified on other grounds.

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[1] Because, as he tells us, he considered that the ideas and teaching were those of the Apostle.

First, as we have already said, there was a loose notion that a writer might lawfully be styled the author of a work which was believed to be an accurate exposition of his teaching. The author of such an exposition might have said that if his readers accepted the work as Peter's, they were not deceived, because the only important part, the teaching, *was* Peter's. The mere words did not matter.

Secondly, there is evidence that this view was current in the first three centuries[1]. Hence we have no right to say that because a book is written in the name of Peter therefore it claims to have been written by him, and is a fraudulent composition if any one else was the actual author. The method of writing a book in the first person, in the name of some well-known character, not the author, has been practised and recognized in all periods of literary activity. It is merely a literary device adopted for the sake of effect, and perfectly understood. To quote a well-known instance, some time since an imaginative description of early church life was published in the form of an autobiography of the Onesimus of Philemon. It is in the first person, and the author has done his best to make it read as if it had actually been written by Onesimus; he does not give his own name, or furnish any statement explaining the pseudonymous character of the book. Yet, of course, he neither expected nor intended that any one should suppose that the book had been written by Onesimus; and the character of the book was at once understood by everybody. If 2 Peter was not written by the Apostle, it may be a work of the same kind; written in perfect good faith, and accepted by its readers as what it really was. In the Old Testament we have a whole group of such works, viz. Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and Daniel; and we may throw a side-light on the questions involved in the authorship of 2 Peter, by quoting some remarks on the fact that the Book of Daniel is written in the name of Daniel.

Prof. A. Kamphausen, in his article on Daniel in Cheyne and Black's *Encyclopædia Biblica*[2], writes: 'Upon the basis of his study of earlier writers, and conscious of his own Divine enlightenment, the author wrote his work of admonition and comfort in the name of the ancient Daniel; it is only ignorance or misapprehension that can lay to his charge as a fault his employment of a literary form which was common throughout antiquity. . . . The people who were in the secret were able to recognize, in what he wrote, the circumstances of their own time, although only darkly alluded to.' Prof. A. A. Bevan, in his *Commentary on Daniel*[1], writes: 'The genesis of this literature[2] offers, it is true, a very difficult psychological problem. Some, at least, of the apocalyptic writers may have believed that they were inspired to reproduce lost revelations; but however we may account for the fact, it is certain that age after age men whose sincerity cannot be questioned put forth writings in the names of ancient prophets and sages.'

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[1] See *Biblical Introduction*, Bennett and Adeney, pp. 7 ff.

[2] 1 Col. 1011 f.

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[1] p. 24.

[2] The apocalyptic literature of which Daniel is the earliest known example.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JAMES

Date and Authorship.

'James,' in i. 1 the brother of the Lord. It is possible, but not probable, that the 'James' of i. 1 was some distinguished Christian teacher not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament or in the literature of the early church.

Turning to the Jameses of the New Testament, James the son of Zebedee is excluded by the early date, A. D. 44, of his martyrdom [1].

Of James the son of Alphæus nothing is told us beyond the bare fact that he was an apostle, and, if he is to be identified with James the Less, that his mother's name was Mary and his brother's Joses. The only passages in which his name occurs are the lists of the Twelve in the Gospels and Acts, and the list of the women who stood by the cross, amongst whom were 'Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses [2].' It seems unlikely that any one who made so little mark on history ever occupied the position of authority claimed by the author of our Epistle. If the son of Alphæus and James the Less were distinct personages, the likelihood that either of them wrote the Epistle is even less.

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[1] Acts xii. 2.

[2] Mark xv. 40. On the theory that James the son of Alphæus was identical with James the brother of the Lord, see below, p. 25.

There remains James the brother of the Lord. The references to this James in Acts, Galatians, and in various works of the first four centuries, shew that he enjoyed great influence and distinction, especially amongst Jewish Christians; so that he could speak with authority to 'the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion'; and 'James' without any further description would be fully understood to be this remarkable and conspicuous leader in the early church. Hence it is generally held that 'James' in i. 1 is intended to mean James the brother of the Lord.

Assuming that this view is correct, we have next to consider whether the Epistle was actually written by James[1].

Date: traces in early literature. It will be convenient to postpone for a while the consideration of the direct evidence as to the name of the author, in order to attempt to determine the date, which will obviously have an important bearing on the question of authorship. We may ask first, What traces of our Epistle are found in the early Christian literature? Such traces may partly consist of passages similar to phrases and sentences in James. Here, however, we are constantly confronted by a serious difficulty, which we must always be prepared to take into account. A similarity between two documents, A and B, may be accounted for in three ways: A may have used B; B may have used A; both A and B may depend upon some third source—a document, or oral tradition, or the set of words, phrases, sayings, and ideas, which are the common stock-in-trade of a period, a church, or a school of thought. Hence if we find similar phrases in James and in some other work we must not at once assume that the author of the other work was acquainted with James, but should be prepared to consider the possibility that the author of James was acquainted with the other work, or that the resemblances are due to the fact that the two works belong to the same period and circle of Christian teaching. The latter is often a very probable explanation [1].

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[1] Cf. pp. 4 ff.

There are parallels between James and the Pauline Epistles, e. g.:—

Jas. i. 22, 'But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.'

Rom. ii. 13, 'For not the hearers of a law are just before God, but the doers of a law shall be justified.'

Jas. iv. 1, 'Your pleasures that war in your members.'

Rom. vii. 23, 'I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.'

Moreover, at first sight at any rate, the discussion of the relation of faith and works in Jas. ii. 14-26 reads like a correction of Paul's teaching as to justification by faith in Rom. iv and Gal. iii. Such resemblances have led Prof. J. B. Mayor [2] and others to conclude that the author of our Epistle was acquainted with *Romans* and perhaps some other Pauline Epistles; but, possibly, they may be accounted for by the connexion of both works with prior Jewish and Christian teaching.

There are also parallels with Hebrews, 1 Peter, and other Epistles, e.g.:—

Jas. iii. 18, 'The fruit of righteousness . . . in peace.'

Heb. xii. 11, 'Peaceable fruit . . . of righteousness.'

It is only, however, in the case of 1 Peter and James [3] that there is any strong reason for believing that one author made use of the other's work. The resemblances between these two Epistles are numerous and striking. Both are addressed to the Dispersion. Both make the following quotations from the Old Testament:—

Isa. xl. 7, 'The grass withereth and the flower falleth.' Jas. i. 11; 1 Pet. i. 24, 25.

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[1] Cf. *Biblical Introduction*, Bennett and Adeney, p. 38.

[2] Commentary on James, p. 143.

[3] Apart from the Pauline Epistles.

Prov. iii. 34, 'God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.' Jas. iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5[1].

Jas. iv. 7, 10, 'Be subject therefore unto God.... Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you.'

1 Pet. v. 6, 'Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.'

Prov. x. 12, 'Love covereth all transgressions'; cf. Jas. v. 20, 'He which converteth a sinner . . . shall cover a multitude of sins'; 1 Pet. iv. 8, 'Love covereth a multitude of sins[2].'

Again, our Epistle has much in common with the Sermon on the Mount, e.g.:—

Jas. iii. 12, 'Can a fig-tree . . . yield olives, or a vine figs?'

Matt. vii. 16, 'Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?'

Jas. ii. 13, 'Judgement is without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy.'

Matt. v. 7, 'Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.'

Matt. vii. 2, 'With what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged.'

Jas. v. 12, 'But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgement.'

Matt. v. 34–37, 'Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your speech be, Yea, yea: Nay, nay; and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.'

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[1] Both follow the Greek version (LXX) though it differs from the Hebrew; and both add the same exhortation.

[2] Here both follow the Hebrew, though the LXX has a different rendering.

Thus a comparison of James with the rest of the New Testament does not give any certain results as to date. It is not clear that any other New Testament writer was acquainted with our Epistle. At the same time, the parallels between this and the other books seem consistent with a date in the apostolic period. It is, indeed, a little difficult to understand either how a writer who shews so little interest in, or sympathy with, the teaching of Paul should have been influenced by the Epistle to the Romans; or how Paul should have been influenced by this Epistle. But yet a writer of the apostolic period must have moved in circles familiar with the ideas and sayings of Paul, Peter, and our Lord; and his work might very well exhibit such resemblances to the other Epistles and the Gospels as are actually found in the Epistle of James[1].

We pass next to the writings of Apostolic Fathers, belonging to the close of the first century and to the second century. These works narrowly escaped being included in the New Testament, and are the earliest Christian literature outside the Bible. They were all written in Greek. Here, too, we find parallels with James; e.g. Clement, a distinguished teacher of the Church of Rome, perhaps its bishop, writing to the Church of Corinth, about A.D. 95, speaks of Rahab being saved 'on account of her faith and hospitality.' It seems certain that Clement was acquainted with Hebrews; so that it is probable, though not absolutely certain, that as he derived the idea of Rahab's faith from Heb. xi. 31, so her 'salvation by hospitality' was suggested by Jas. ii. 25, 'Was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works, in that she received the messengers, and sent them out another way?'

The *Shepherd of Hermas* is a collection of parables and allegories, published at Rome about A.D. 130–160;

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[1] Cf. p. 13.

and was as popular in its day as *Pilgrim's Progress* is now. It has a section on 'double-mindedness,' *dipsuchia*, which reminds us of Jas. i. 8, 'A doubleminded man, unstable in all his ways[1],' and other parallels with this Epistle, e.g.:

Jas. iv. 7: 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.'

Hermas, *Mandate* xii. 5: 'The devil can wrestle with you, but cannot throw you. If therefore ye resist him, he will flee from you, vanquished and put to shame.'

The *Didache*, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, is a pamphlet, a short manual of Christian life and church order, composed about A.D. 100. The *Didache*, too, denounces 'double-mindedness,' thus: chap. 2, 'Thou shalt not be doubleminded, *dignomon*, nor doubletongued, *diglossos*, for doubletonguedness, *diglossia*, is a deadly snare'; and, chap. 4, 'Thou shalt not be in two minds, *dipsucheseis*, whether (to do justice) or not.' Cf. also Jas. v. 16, 'Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.'

Didache iv: 'In the church thou shalt confess thy transgressions, and shalt not come forward for thy prayer with an evil conscience.'

These may illustrate the kind of parallels between our Epistle and the Apostolic Fathers[2], which are sometimes held to prove that these writers were acquainted with James, and that therefore the Epistle must have been written before the close of the first century A.D. The more general opinion, however, is that the mutual resemblances do not amount to a proof that James was known by the Apostolic Fathers; they might possibly be due to the use of the latter by the author of the Epistle; or, more probably, may indicate that the Epistle belonged to the same period, and emanated from the same school of Christian teaching as some of the other works. On the other hand, the comparison of the Epistle and the works of the Apostolic Fathers does not afford any ground for denying that the former was in existence when the latter were being written.

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[1] Cf. Jas. iv. 8.

[2] Similar, but as a rule less striking, parallels to those given above are found in the *Letter to Diognetus*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, in the second century, and in *Barnabas* and the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* in the first century.

We turn next to the translations of the New Testament and other documents belonging to the close of the second and the beginning of the third century. Our Epistle is included in the Old Latin Version, and in the Peshitto or Syriac Version[1]. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, a native of Asia Minor, in his work *Against Heresies*, completed about A.D. 180, says of Abraham, 'He believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God[2].' This is generally regarded as a quotation from Jas. ii. 23. So far, however, none of the passages referred to as possible traces of our Epistle are given as citations from James, or indeed as citations at all; but are simply interwoven into the work of the various writers, as phrases and verses of Scripture often are into modern sermons and religious books. Hence the difficulty of knowing when we have actually discovered a trace of James[3]. But Origen, who taught at Alexandria, Cæsarea, and elsewhere from A.D. 203 to A.D. 254, expressly mentions the statement that faith without works is dead as occurring is an Epistle ascribed to James.

On the other hand, our Epistle is absent from the *Muratorian Fragment*, a Latin catalogue of the books of the New Testament, compiled about A.D. 180–200; and no traces of the Epistle have been cited from

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[1] Doubts, however, have been suggested as to whether James was included in the original editions of these versions—Westcott, *N. T. Canon*, p. 261; Mayor, *James*, p. xlix.

[2] Book IV, ch. 27, only extant in Latin version.

[3] Other writers of this period who are said to make use of the Epistle without, however, naming its author are Theophilus of Antioch and Hippolytus.

Hegesippus, A.D. 165–175, who has preserved for us the narratives of the martyrdom of James the brother of our Lord; or from the mass of apocryphal literature known as the *Clementines*, professing to be addressed by Clement of Rome to James of Jerusalem, but actually written towards the close of the second century.

Thus considering for the present simply the question of date, a comparison with early literature shews that James certainly existed before A.D. 200, and probably before A.D. 100. The absence of any trace of it in many early works may be due to two causes: first, it may have circulated in some churches only; secondly, its very general and practical character might prevent its being used in works devoted to theological controversy.

Early testimony to authorship. There is virtually no external evidence as to authorship, except that which is involved in the testimony as to date already given. That is to say, no early writer states, as of his own knowledge, that the Epistle was written by James. Origen, as we have seen, was acquainted with it as attributed to him; and, from his time onwards, it is commonly cited as James. On the other hand, Origen seems to have doubted whether it was actually written by the Apostle; and Eusebius[1] mentions that it was not universally accepted. The simplest explanation of these facts is that the Epistle was in circulation at the end of the second century; that there was no information as to its authorship, other than the name 'James' in the opening verse; that on this account, and because there were large districts of Christendom in which it had hitherto been unknown, many of the churches hesitated for a while to accept it. Practically, therefore, we are left to examine the internal evidence for and against authorship by James without either confirmation or disproof from external testimony.

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[1] See p. 5.

Internal evidence. In the opening verse the Epistle claims to have been written by 'James,' i.e. in all probability, the brother of our Lord. This claim must not be lightly set aside. The very fact that the Epistle affords no other obvious express testimony to such authorship is against the supposition that it was written by some one other than James who wished it to be accepted as conveying the teaching of the Apostle. He would naturally have introduced other clear references to the teacher in whose name he was writing.

The general character of the Epistle is in accordance with what we know of James. It is chiefly taken up with morality; James represented what may be called the Jewish element in Christianity, and might well be anxious to preserve for the new faith the high ethical ideal of Judaism. The characteristic Pauline doctrines are absent, and the Epistle seems to correct an exaggerated form of that doctrine. James was the head of the Judaizing party; he was not, like some of his followers, in open opposition to the Apostle of the Gentiles; but his standpoint and his favourite truths would naturally be different from Paul's. The slight reference to Jesus and the absence of any transcendental doctrine of the Person of Christ are quite in keeping with James who was the brother of Jesus, and apparently did not believe in him till after his death. Moreover, there are numerous parallels to passages in the Sermon on the Mount. Although James was not a disciple of our Lord, he must have been familiar with his favourite sayings, and might be expected to remember and reproduce them[1].

The reader may perhaps be disappointed that the internal evidence for the composition of this Epistle by James is not so overwhelmingly conclusive as that for the composition of Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians by Paul. But this fact affords no presumption against authorship by the Apostle. In the case of the Pauline Epistles we have a group of documents which confirm one another; our present Epistle stands alone. We have also, in the Acts of the Apostles, an historical narrative of the period to which the four Epistles belong, and they are largely taken up with the peculiar circumstances of the times. Hence the comparison of the letters with the Acts and with one another is decisive as to their authorship. If our Epistle were one of a group attributed to James, if this group dealt with the burning questions of the day, and could be compared with a history of the period, the internal evidence would be equally decisive. Numerous objections to the ascription to the brother of the Lord have been derived from the contents of the Epistle. We have already had occasion to notice some of these, viz. the alleged use of other books of the New Testament; the slight reference to Christ, to the doctrines about him, and to the teaching of Paul; and, on the other hand, the apparent antagonism to Paul's doctrine of justification by faith[1]. None of these objections seem serious. A somewhat similar argument calls attention to the absence of any reference to striking personalities like Paul and Peter, to the great missionary enterprises of the early church, to the controversies as to faith and practice, or to the wonderful development of religious thought and life. It has been held to be strange that one of the leaders of the Christian society, at the very centre of the movement, should write such a letter. But the Epistle may have been written before these developments had made much progress, or, in any case, it is easy to imagine that the special occasion for the letter, the needs of those addressed, made the Epistle what it is. This difficulty, the lack of any reflection of the circumstances of a period, remains to whatever date the book is assigned. Again, it has been said that the corruption of the church implied in some passages points to a late date; but 1 and 2 Corinthians shew that some churches included a corrupt element from the very beginning. Then, too, we gather from Acts and the Pauline writings that James held that the Mosaic law was still binding on Jewish Christians, yet the letter makes no reference to this obligation. Probably James and his readers were so much at one on this matter that no mention of it was necessary, and James may have accepted and endorsed the obligation without being in the least anxious to make it prominent in his teaching. It is further objected that, though James was a Jew, a working-man of a small town in Galilee, the Epistle is written in good Greek, the quotations from the Old Testament mostly follow the LXX, and use is made of the Apocrypha[1]. But we have no evidence as to how much a Galilæan Jew may have known of Greek or the LXX; or, again, as to how far the author may have been assisted by some one familiar with both.

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[1] Cf. p. 15.

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[1] Cf. p. 14, and notes on ii. 14-26.

Thus neither external nor internal evidence affords anything like conclusive proof that James did not write the Epistle. On the whole, the Epistle is such as he might have been expected to write; and we are warranted in admitting the claim made by i. 1, that the book is the work of 'James,' and in identifying the author with James the Just, the brother of the Lord, and the head of the Church of Jerusalem.

Date. James being the author, the composition of the Epistle necessarily falls in the first century A. D. The absence of reference to most of the ideas, controversies, events, and circumstances of the period of Paul's missionary activity suggests a date before that period, i. e. about A. D. 45. But if silence on such topics is due to the special occasion of the letter, it may have been written at any point in the Apostle's career. A date A. D. 60–70 would suit the parallels to other New Testament literature, and the apparent reference in i. 1 to Christian churches amongst the Jews of the Dispersion. Such churches can hardly have existed in A. D. 45.

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[1] Cf. notes on i. 5, 19.

Current views. We cannot claim anything like a general consensus of opinion for the view adopted here; there are distinguished scholars who deny authorship by James. It has been held, for instance, that the book is a Jewish work adapted for Christian use by an editor[1]. Harnack, in his monumental work on early Christian literature—often referred to in somewhat misleading fashion, as indicating a strong reaction to traditional views—regards our book as made up of passages from sermons which were composed about A. D. 120–140; he dates the compilation about A. D. 170, and ascribes it to some James of that period[2].

Nevertheless a majority of scholars of different schools of criticism agree in assigning the Epistle to James; so that Prof. J. B. Mayor has ventured to make the somewhat sweeping statement, 'We may say it is now generally recognized as being the earliest portion of the New Testament[3].' Prof. Mayor himself in his *Commentary*, and in the article on the Epistle in Dr. Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, strongly maintains that James wrote the Epistle 'in the fifth decade of the Christian era'; and Prof. Vernon Bartlet argues for a similar view in his *Apostolic Age*; Prof. Adeney also inclines to the same opinion[4]. On the other hand, Prof. Salmon, in his *New Testament Introduction*, holds that James wrote the Epistle late in life, after the Judaistic controversy had subsided.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMPOSITION.

Place of writing. It has been frequently pointed out that the natural phenomena alluded to are those of

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[1] Spitta, ap. Adeney, *Bibl. Int.*

[2] See Chronological Table in Harnack.

[3] *Comm.* p. cxxiv.

[4] *Bibl. Introd.*

Palestine, e.g. the neighbourhood of the sea; the cultivation of figs, olives, and grapes; salt and bitter springs; earlier and later rain[1]. Otherwise there are no clear indications of the exact place where the Epistle was written; but James is always spoken of as living at Jerusalem, and we may safely conclude that he wrote from that city.

To whom addressed? The phrase of the opening verse, 'to the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion,' suggests that the Epistle is a circular letter addressed to Jewish Christians of the 'Dispersion,' i.e. the various Jewish communities scattered throughout the world. This view must be correct if the Epistle was written about A.D. 45. Those who prefer a date in the second century understand 'the twelve tribes of the Dispersion' as a figurative description of the scattered Gentile Christian churches, like Paul's 'Israel of God[2].' This view might perhaps be held if James wrote the Epistle late in life.

Occasion. The contents suggest that the Apostle was moved to write this letter by what he had learnt of some particular church or churches, but there is nothing to throw light on the locality or special circumstances of these churches. The sins and sufferings dealt with are mostly those of churches generally in all periods; and persecution was widespread. The Epistle may be a summary of sermons addressed by the Apostle to Christians at Jerusalem, and inspired by their shortcomings. He knew that the same faults prevailed elsewhere, and therefore sought to extend the influence of his teaching by means of this letter.

LIFE OF JAMES, THE BROTHER OF THE LORD.

The reader may transfer what is commonly said as to the general circumstances of the early life of Jesus to his brother James. The Apostle was one of the large family—five brothers and several sisters[1]—of a carpenter in a small country town. The father, Joseph, died before the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, so that our Lord became the head of the family, and perhaps for a time the chief support, by his work as a carpenter, of his mother and brothers and sisters. James grew up under the gracious influence of Jesus, with the perfect example of his elder brother continually before his eyes. When he was old enough he, too, would take his share of carpentering. He may have been the confidant of the hopes and plans of Jesus as to his future mission. At any rate, after the beginning of his ministry he sometimes heard him speak, and must often have heard reports of his words and deeds. But 'a prophet has no honour amongst his own kinsfolk,' and it is written of the brethren of Jesus, 'Even his brethren did not believe on him[2].' On two occasions their attitude towards him was hostile or suspicious[3]; and our Lord openly declared that his disciples were to him 'brother and sister and mother.' Probably what is said of the brethren generally applied to James in particular. Apparently he was married[4]; it was the general custom among the Jews for men to marry at an early age.

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[1] See i. 6, iii. 4, 11, 12, v. 7: cf. Alford's Greek Test. iv. 101.

[2] Gal. vi. 16: cf. on Jas. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1.

Paul tells us that our Lord, after his Resurrection, appeared to 'James[5],' i.e. as elsewhere in the Pauline Epistles, the brother of the Lord. Doubtless, as in the case of Paul himself, this appearance was the occasion of the Apostle's conversion, for which, however, the way had been prepared by his previous knowledge of Jesus, and especially by the Passion.

He would be included amongst the brethren of Jesus when they associated themselves with his disciples after the Resurrection [1]. He was specially pre-eminent amongst his brethren, either as the eldest or the ablest, or both; none of the rest are mentioned by name in the Acts or Epistles [2]. As the representative of the brethren of Jesus, he naturally attained a position of authority in the church at Jerusalem. Thus, when Peter escaped from prison, it was to James, in particular, that he sent the news of his liberation [3]. After the discussion of the church at Jerusalem on the terms on which Gentiles were to be received into the church, James suggested and formulated their decision [4]. On Paul's last recorded visit to Jerusalem we are told that 'he went in unto James [5].' Similarly Paul mentions James with Cephas (Peter) and John as 'pillars' of the church [6].

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[1] Matt. xiii. 55, 56; note the 'all' referring to the sisters.

[2] John vii. 5.

[3] Mark iii. 21, 31–35; John vii. 1–9.

[4] 1 Cor. ix. 5.

[5] 1 Cor. xv. 7.

James was the head of the Judaizing Christians, i. e. the Jews who had embraced Christianity, but still lived as strict Jews, and were anxious to include in the new religion as large an element as possible of Pharisaic Judaism; Peter and John seem, for the most part, to have acted with him. Such a position naturally involved some appearance of antagonism to Paul, who was the champion of the freedom of the Gentile Christians from the yoke of the law. From the outset, and throughout his career, Paul's work was interfered with, and the peace of the Gentile churches disturbed, by fanatic Jewish Christians who claimed to represent James and his colleagues at Jerusalem. As so often happens, the inspired leaders were moderate, rational, and tolerant; but their followers exaggerated their personal and doctrinal differences. Whenever James and Paul met, they easily discovered a *modus vivendi*. It was largely through the influence of the former that the assembly at Jerusalem decided that Gentile converts did not need to be circumcised or to keep the Mosaic law[1]. Paul tells us, probably in reference to the same occasion, that 'James and Cephas and John . . . gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; only they would that we should remember the poor[2].' Similarly, when Paul paid his last visit to Jerusalem, he was cordially welcomed by James. The head of the church at Jerusalem remained loyal to the decision which had released Gentile Christians from obedience to the law; but he was anxious, on the other hand, that Paul should clear himself from the charge of conducting a propaganda against the observance of the law by Jewish Christians. Accordingly Paul associated himself with some members of the church at Jerusalem in conspicuous public performance of the legal ritual connected with certain vows. Unfortunately this publicity led to Paul's arrest and imprisonment; but the proceedings illustrate the good understanding between the apostles and their spirit of mutual concession[3]. There is no later reference to James in the New Testament. Our data suggest that the Apostle was not so much engaged in active missionary work as in guiding and controlling the church at Jerusalem. His chief difficulties were the relations of the church to Jews on the one hand, and to Gentile converts on the other; and his success in establishing the principle that the church should comprehend both parties is a proof alike of his liberality, tact, and authority.

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[1] Acts i. 14.

[2] Except, probably, Jude, in his own Epistle.

[3] Acts xii. 17. [4] Acts xv. [5] Acts xxi. 18. [6] Gal. ii. 9–14.

The deep impression made by James upon both Jews and Christians is shewn by the numerous references to him in the Christian Apocrypha and other documents of the first three centuries. Most of the statements about him are apparently legendary. Some of these are preserved by Eusebius[4] in the second book of his *Ecclesiastical*

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[1] Acts xv.

[2] Galatians ii. 9, 10.

[3] Acts xxi. 17–26.

[4] Cp. p. 5.

History, chapters i and xxiii. He tells us that James was surnamed 'the Just' on account of his high character, and was the first bishop of Jerusalem. He quotes Clement of Alexandria[1] as stating that 'Peter, James, and John . . . . chose James the Just as bishop'; and that 'The Lord imparted the gift of knowledge to James the Just, to John, and Peter after his resurrection; these delivered it to the rest of the apostles, and they to the seventy.'

Eusebius himself states that James the Just was thrown from a wing of the Temple, and beaten to death with a fuller's club[2]. But in another place[3] he reproduces a long account of James and his martyrdom by a distinguished Christian teacher of the second century[4]. Herein it is stated that 'This apostle was consecrated from his mother's womb. He drank neither wine nor fermented liquors, and abstained from animal food. A razor never came upon his head, he never anointed with oil, and never used a bath. He alone was allowed to enter the sanctuary[5]. He never wore woollen, but linen garments. He used to enter the temple alone, and was often found upon his bended knees, interceding for the forgiveness of the people, so that his knees became as hard as camels' through his habitual supplication and kneeling before God.' The account goes on to state that the Jews became alarmed at James' success in persuading the people that Jesus was the Messiah, and placed the Apostle on a pinnacle of the Temple that he might publicly deny the Messiahship of Jesus. But he declared that Jesus was 'sitting in the heavens, on the right hand of a great power, and was about to come on the clouds of heaven.' Whereupon they cast him down, and began to stone him; and he knelt down and prayed, saying, 'I entreat thee, O Lord God and Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Finally a fuller beat out his brains with the club that he used to beat out clothes. Eusebius goes on to say: 'Indeed so admirable a man was James, and so celebrated amongst all for his justice, that even the wiser part of the Jews held that this [his death] was the cause of the subsequent siege of Jerusalem, which happened to them for no other reason than the crime against him.' He further quotes Josephus, the great Jewish historian at the close of the first century, as expressing this opinion; and adds a passage from his work on the *Antiquities of the Jews*[1], in which he states that the Apostle was stoned by the Jews.

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[1] Cf. p. 39.
[2] Bk. II. ch. i.
[3] Bk. II. ch. xxiii.
[4] Hegesippus.
[5] *τὰ ἅγια*, usually the Holy of Holies, sometimes the Temple.

The *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, an apocryphal work of the close of the first or the beginning of the second century, tells us[2] that James, after partaking of the Last Supper with Christ, made a vow that he would not again taste food till he had seen him risen from the dead; and that Christ appeared to him as the Risen One, and said, 'Now eat thy bread, for the Son of Man is risen from the dead.'

Two apocryphal works were written in the name of James: first, *The History of James concerning the birth of Mary*, commonly called *The Protevangelium of James*, containing a narrative from the birth of Mary to the massacre of the innocents, a work of the second century; and, secondly, the *Liturgy of St. James*, in use in the Palestinian churches at least as early as the fourth century[3].

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[1] *Antiq.* XX. ix. 1, sometimes held to be a Christian interpolation.

[2] In a fragment preserved in Jerome, *de Virginibus*, I. ii; cf. Neander, *Planting of Christianity*, i. 353 ff., Eng. trans.

[3] For *Canonicity* see p. 5.

ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

i. 1. Salutation.

2–18. On trial and temptation.

(*a*) Cheerful endurance disciplines character (2–4).

(*b*) Wisdom freely given by God in answer to believing prayer (5–8).

(*c*) The transience of earthly life a ground of cheerful endurance (9–11).

(*d*) Temptation springs from sinful inclinations, and may be conquered by loyal faith (12–18).

19–27. Practical religious life does not consist in listening to sermons and making a profession of Christian faith, but in consistent conduct, especially in the use of the tongue.

ii. 1–13. Undue deference to 'the man with a gold ring' at 'the synagogue' and humiliation of the poor man are a foolish and flagrant violation of the law of Christ; they set the sinner at variance with the law as a whole, and will be followed by condign punishment.

14–26. Faith useless without works. Justification by works and faith illustrated by Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, and by Rahab's hospitality to the spies.

iii. 1–12. The tongue the occasion and instrument of sin, especially in the personal jealousies, party quarrels, and theological controversies of Christian teachers.

13–18. Dissensions within the church inspired by a 'devilish wisdom'; 'the wisdom from above' makes for peace and mutual consideration.

iv. 1–10. Such quarrels spring from worldly greed and ambition; they alienate men from God, and should lead to bitter remorse.

11, 12. Eagerness to sit in judgement on the brethren shews contempt for God and His law.

13–17. Confident absorption in the pursuit of material profit is a sinful ignoring of man's constant dependence on Divine Providence.

v. 1–6. Denunciation of the avarice and debauchery of the rich.

7–11. The duty and certain reward of patient endurance illustrated by the cases of husbandmen, the prophets, and Job.

12. Swearing to be avoided.

13–18. The efficacy of prayer for physical and spiritual disease; its power illustrated by the case of Elijah and the famine.

19, 20. The blessedness of winning back a brother who has wandered from the truth.

This Epistle makes a startling revelation of the depth to which a Christian church could sink even in the age of primitive faith. It furnishes a companion picture to those in 2 Peter, Jude, Revelation, and especially 1 Corinthians. As at Corinth in Paul's time, the churches addressed by James were torn with envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, largely arising out of an ambitious desire to teach. Hence the Apostle's great passage on the tongue.

The Apostle applies to this situation the principles, and sometimes the actual precepts, of the Sermon on the Mount, e.g. as to consistent and beneficent life, swearing, and the sin of censoriousness.

He denounces 'respect of persons' and the oppression of the poor by the rich quite as if he were an ancient Hebrew prophet; and enforces his teaching by examples from the history of Israel, Abraham and Isaac, Rahab, Job, Elijah.

The apparent contradiction of Pauline teaching in the section on faith and works, ii. 14–26, has excited much controversy. Properly understood it supplements and completes the doctrine of justification by faith.

The verses (v. 14, 15) about anointing the sick with oil have often been appealed to in support of faith-healing on the one hand, and as an authority for the Romanist sacrament of extreme unction on the other. Similarly the Romanist sacrament of confession is supposed to be supported by v. 16. But, according to the view taken in the exposition of v. 14–16, these verses do not really support either faith-healing or the sacraments.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF
PETER

DATE AND AUTHORSHIP.

'THE first Epistle General of Peter,' as it is styled in the English Versions, is written in the name of 'Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,' who speaks of himself as 'a fellow-elder' with the elders of the churches to which he writes, 'and a witness of the sufferings of Christ[1].'

Parallels with the rest of the New Testament. This Epistle contains numerous parallels with the other Epistles, &c. Illustrations of those with James have already been given[2]. Certain characteristics are common to 1 Peter and the Johannine literature; e.g. the priesthood of believers[3]; Christ the Lamb of God[4]; and the use of 'Babylon' as a symbolic name for Rome[5]. There are many similar parallels between 1 Peter and Hebrews, e.g.:

'Christ also suffered for sins once.' 1 Pet. iii. 18.

'Who . . . bare our sins.' 1 Pet. ii. 24.

'Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many.' Heb. ix. 28. And again—

'To the elect who are sojourners.' 1 Pet. i. 1.

'I beseech you as aliens and sojourners.' 1 Pet. ii. 11.

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[1] Chap. i. 1, v. 1.

[2] Cf. p. 14f.

[3] 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9; Rev. i. 6, v. 10, xx. 6; not elsewhere in the New Testament.

[4] *ἀμνός*, John i. 29, 36; 1 Pet. i. 19: *ἀρνίον*, Rev. v. 6 and passim. *ἀμνός* is also used of Christ in Acts viii. 32 in a quotation from Isa. liii. 7.

[5] 1 Pet. v. 13; Rev. xiv. 8, &c.; cf. note on former passage.

'These . . . confessed that they were strangers and sojourners[1] on the earth.' Heb. xi. 13.

The most numerous and striking parallels, however, are those with the Pauline Epistles; 1 Peter is saturated with the phraseology and ideas of Paul. Romans furnishes several examples; note for instance the following, all taken from the single section Rom. xii. 1—xiii. 14:—

'Not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts.' 1 Pet. i. 14.

'Be not fashioned according to[2] this world.' Rom. xii 2.

'Seeing ye have purified your souls in obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently.' 1 Pet. i. 22.

'Being fervent in your love amongst yourselves.' 1 Pet. iv. 8.

'Let love be unfeigned[3]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another.' Rom. xii. 10.

'Putting away therefore all wickedness,' &c. 1 Pet. ii. 1.

'Let us therefore put away the works of darkness.' Rom. xiii. 12.

'Long for the reasonable milk.' 1 Pet. ii. 2.

'A holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.' 1 Pet. ii. 5.

'I beseech you to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well-pleasing to God, which is your reasonable[4] service.' Rom. xii. 1.

'Be ye all likeminded, sympathetic, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing.' 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

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[1] The word for 'sojourners,' *παρεπίδημοι*, does not occur in the N. T. except in these passages.

[2] The word for 'fashion according to,' *συσχηματίζειν*, does not occur in the N. T. except in these two passages.

[3] 'Unfeigned,' *ἀνυπόκριτος*: only 2 Cor. vi. 6; 1 Tim. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 5; Jas. iii. 17 elsewhere in the N. T. 'Fervent,' Rom. xii. 11, is *ζέοντες*; 'fervently,' 1 Pet. i. 22, is *ἐκτενῶς*.

[4] 'Reasonable,' *λογικός*, in these two passages only in the N. T.

'Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. Be ye of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits. (Be ye) rendering to no man evil for evil.' Rom. xii. 14–17.

'According as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; if any man speaketh, (speaking) as it were oracles of God; if any man ministereth, (ministering) as of the strength which God supplieth.' 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.

'And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, (let us prophesy) according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, (let us give ourselves) to our ministry.' Rom. xii. 6, 7.

There are also parallels between our Epistle and other portions of Romans. The following are examples of parallels with Galatians:—

'An inheritance . . . reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.' 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.

'But before faith came, we were guarded under the law, shut up unto the faith, which should afterwards be revealed.' Gal. iii. 23.

'As free, and not using your freedom for a cloke of wickedness, but as bondservants[1] of God. . . . Love the brotherhood.' 1 Pet. ii. 16, 17.

'For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only (use) not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants[2] one to the other.' Gal. v. 13.

There are further parallels with Ephesians, e. g.:—

'Christ, who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested . . . for your sake.' 1 Pet. i. 20.

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[1] *δοῦλοι*, slaves.

[2] *δουλεύετε*.

'Christ, even as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world . . . having foreordained us.' Eph. i. 4, 5.

'Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.' 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22.

'Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and he put all things in subjection under his feet.' Eph. i. 21, 22.

'Christ also suffered for sins once . . . being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.' 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19.

'Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth.' Eph. iv. 9.

Of the Pastoral Epistles, the more striking parallels are with 1 Timothy and Titus, e.g.:—

'But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may shew forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' 1 Pet. ii. 9.

'Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works.' Titus iii. 14.

The parallels with the other Pauline Epistles are less striking.

In considering these parallels, allowance must be made for ideas and phraseology, hymns, prayers, confessions of faith, and other liturgical matter, which were the common property of the primitive church; and would introduce a degree of similarity into the writings of different authors. But much of the thought and language of 1 Peter belongs to what was characteristic of the teaching of Paul and his followers as distinct from that of the Palestinian or Jewish Christian churches. The parallels, in any case, shew a dependence upon Pauline teaching. But we may go further. There is great variety of opinion as to the precise character and extent of the dependence of 1 Peter on the writings of Paul. It has even been suggested that it is just possible that Paul himself was the author of 1 Peter[1], the passages in which Peter's name occurs being later insertions; and, again, that our Epistle and Ephesians were the work of the same author[2]. But that dependence, especially on Romans, is very widely recognized[3].

The Second Epistle of Peter contains a definite and certain reference to 1 Peter: 'This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you[4].' It is most unlikely that the reference can be to some 'first epistle' other than that now extant. Moreover, the author of 2 Peter was acquainted with this Epistle[5].

There are parallels with James, see on Jas. i. 2, 10–12; and Prof. Mayor maintains that Peter made use of that Epistle. There are also parallels with the Synoptic Gospels, especially with Luke; e.g.:—

'Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.' 1 Pet. v. 8.

'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat.' Luke xxii. 31.

Such parallels, however, have little bearing on the question of authorship; they may be either personal reminiscences of the Apostle, or due to the use of the Synoptic Gospels by a late author.

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[1] Harnack, *Chronologie*.

[2] Seufert, cf. Salmon, p. 469.

[3] There are a few exceptions: Weiss thinks that Paul made use of 1 Peter; but, in view of Paul's original and fertile mind, and of emphatic declarations that he was not indebted for his teaching to the older apostles, this view is very improbable.

[4] 2 Pet. iii. 1.

[5] Cf. on 2 Peter.

There are further parallels with Acts, e.g. (from Peter's speeches):—

'If ye call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear.' 1 Pet. i. 17.

'Peter .... said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him.' Acts x. 34, 35.

Another parallel is from Paul's speech to the elders of Ephesus:—

'Feed the flock of God which is among you.' 1 Pet. v. 2.

'Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God.' Acts xx. 28.

There are also parallels from the other portions of Acts, e.g.:—

'These things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven.' 1 Pet. i. 12.

'There came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.' Acts ii. 2–4.

Here again it is not certain whether we have personal reminiscences or a literary use of Acts.

To sum up this branch of the evidence; the use of the Pauline Epistles indicates a date after their composition; the reference to our Epistle in 2 Peter shews that 1 Peter was widely known as the work of the Apostle, at any rate in the first half of the second century[1]. On the whole, the literary relations of 1 Peter to the rest of the New Testament are consistent with the view that the Epistle was composed in the later Pauline, or immediate post-Pauline period, i.e. about A.D. 60–80.

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[1] See on 2 Peter.

Apostolic Fathers[1]. There are numerous more or less striking parallels between 1 Peter and the Apostolic Fathers. According to Eusebius[2], Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, about the middle of the second century, made use of our Epistle. In the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, a church manual often dated about A. D. 100, we find :—

'Abstain from fleshly and bodily lusts.' Chap. i. 4. Compare—

'I beseech you .... to abstain from fleshly lusts.' 1 Pet. ii. 11.

Many other parallels with Hermas, Clement of Rome[3], &c., are like those already illustrated in connexion with James[4], and do not materially help us to determine the date of the Epistle. But Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, in his *Epistle to the Philippians* written just before his martyrdom in A.D. 155, clearly makes use of 1 Peter[5], e.g. :—

'Whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' 1 Pet. i. 8.

'Which things angels desire to look into.' 1 Pet. i. 12.

'On whom, not having seen (him), ye believe with joy unspeakable and full of glory, which many desire to enter into.' Polycarp, i. 3.

'Wherefore girding up the loins of your minds.' 1 Pet. i. 13.

'Believers in God, which raised him from the dead, and gave him glory.' 1 Pet. i. 21.

'Wherefore girding up your loins, serve God in fear and truth . . . believing on him who raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave him glory and a throne at his right hand.' Polycarp, ii. 1.

Later literature. The various Christian documents of the close of the second and the beginning of the third century shew clearly that the Epistle was universally known and accepted as the Apostle's after about A.D. 200. It is contained in the Old Latin and Syriac versions; it is expressly quoted as Peter's by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian. Eusebius preserves a statement of Origen to the effect that Peter left one Epistle which was fully acknowledged; and Eusebius himself places 1 Peter amongst those books of the New Testament which were universally accepted[1]. From his time, c. A.D. 320 onwards, the Petrine authorship remained unchallenged until the modern revival of the critical study of the Bible[2].

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[1] Cf. p. 16.

[2] *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 39; cf. p. 5.

[3] Cf. p. 16.

[4] See pp. 16f.

[5] Doubts have been cast on the genuineness of this letter of Polycarp, but it is now generally accepted.

On the other hand, there is no mention of this Epistle in the Muratorian Canon[3]; there is, however, nothing in that document which implies that the Epistle was known to the author and rejected; moreover, the Canon, as it has reached us, is incomplete in parts; and in its original form it may have mentioned 1 Peter.

Thus, as far as external evidence is concerned, the early witnesses shew that our Epistle was in existence in the first half of the second century, and that it was universally accepted as Peter's at the close of that century, unless indeed it was unknown to certain Italian churches represented by the Muratorian Canon. This branch of the evidence therefore is strongly in favour of the Petrine authorship.

Internal evidence. As regards internal evidence, we have already shewn[4] that the Epistle has some points of contact with the Synoptic Gospels and the speeches of Peter, such as we should look for in an Epistle written by that Apostle. But neither in these respects nor generally is the Epistle so characteristically Petrine as to afford conclusive proof that Peter was its author. On the other hand, certain objections to the Petrine authorship have been based on the contents of the Epistle. Some of these are trivial. It is urged that the Apostle could not have written such good Greek; but we have no exact information as to how far Greek was spoken amongst the Jews of Galilee, or as to the linguistic attainments of Peter, or as to what use he may have made of secretarial assistance[1]. Peter at Babylon[2], it is said, was not likely to have been familiarly acquainted with either Paul's writings or his teaching; but, probably, here, as in the Revelation, Babylon means Rome. Again, it is pointed out that the quotations in this Epistle mostly follow the LXX, and some critics suppose that Peter, as a Palestinian Jew, would have translated for himself from the Hebrew; but the LXX was the one Greek Bible of the times, and it was as natural for a Jew writing in Greek to take his quotations from the LXX, as it is for any one writing to-day in English to use the Authorized or Revised Version. Even Paul usually follows the LXX, except where he finds it necessary to correct its renderings, and Peter had not the scholarly training and attainments of the pupil of Gamaliel. Again, our Epistle is addressed to the churches of Asia Minor, among the rest to those of Galatia and Asia. Paul had founded the churches in both these provinces, for Asia included Ephesus and Miletus; and we have his letters to the Galatians and Ephesians. Yet 1 Peter makes no reference to the Apostle of the Gentiles. Perhaps Peter wrote specially to Jewish Christians whose churches may have been organized apart from the followers of Paul; or there might easily be other special circumstances to account for silence on this subject. Similar considerations may explain the absence of personal reminiscences of the sayings and doings of our Lord.

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[1] For these authorities cf. pp. 18f., also Clement of Alexandria, bishop of that city, c. A.D. 200, and Tertullian, North African divine, c. A.D. 220.

[2] With insignificant exceptions.

[3] See p. 18.

[4] See pp. 36f.

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[1] Cf. on James, p. 22.

[2] 1 Pet. v. 13.

There are, however, two serious difficulties in the way of accepting the Petrine authorship—first, certain features which are said to point to a late date, and the large use of the Pauline Epistles.

First, the alleged indications of a late date. The use of the Pauline Epistles implies that 1 Peter must have been written after A.D. 62. The same conclusion seems to follow from v. 13, where the author of the Epistle sends his readers a greeting from Mark. According to Col. iv. 12, Mark[1] was at Rome with Paul during his first imprisonment; and according to 2 Tim. iv. 13, Paul wished Mark to join him at Rome during the same, or it may be a later, imprisonment. If, as seems most probable, 'Babylon' stands for Rome, the author of 1 Peter was in Rome with Mark. As he makes no mention of Paul, the letter must have been written after his death, or, at any rate, after he was released from his first imprisonment. Again, it would be more easy to understand how any one came to write to the churches of Asia Minor without mentioning Paul, if that apostle had been dead for some years. Another special point is raised by Prof. Ramsay. The Epistle speaks of its readers 'being reproached for the name of Christ' and suffering as Christians[2]. The motive of the first persecutions was hatred of Christianity, but the pretext was put forward that the persecuted were disturbers of the public peace; to be a Christian was not in itself a crime in the eye of the law. Nero, for instance, tortured and burnt the Christians because he charged them with having set fire to Rome. But, according to Prof. Ramsay, Christianity in itself cannot have been regarded as a crime earlier than the reign of the emperor Domitian[3], i.e. not before A.D. 80. As Peter was a contemporary of our Lord, and a married man when he began his ministry, the Apostle would be about 70 in A.D. 66[1], and about 84 in A.D. 80. Prof. Ramsay, indeed, ascribes the Epistle to Peter, in spite of the difficulties raised by his own theory. He maintains that about A.D. 80 the Apostle was still alive and capable of writing this vigorous and suggestive work. Such a view is improbable on the face of it, and sets aside the weighty traditional evidence which points to A.D. 66 as the approximate date of Peter's death[2]. But Prof. Ramsay's criterion is not decisive; whatever pretexts for persecution were put forward, both Christians and persecutors were aware of the distinction between martyrs whose only crime was their religion, and malefactors who had broken the ordinary laws. Hence, while the indications of date fix the Epistle as near to A.D. 66 as possible, they are consistent with authorship by Peter about A.D. 64-66.

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[1] It is barely possible, but extremely improbable, that 'Mark' in 1 Peter refers to some one other than 'Mark' in Colossians and 2 Timothy.

[2] 1 Pet. iv. 14–16.

[3] A.D. 81–96. *Church in the Rom. Emp.* pp. 262 f.

The second main objection is the large dependence of the Epistle on the Pauline writings. Can we believe that the chief of the Apostles of the Circumcision, the teacher regarded by Paul's opponents as their leader, the Cephas of whom Paul wrote, in an Epistle used by the author of 1 Peter, 'I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned[3]'—can we believe that *he* would write as if he were a disciple of the Apostle of the Gentiles? At first sight the difficulty seems insuperable; yet it may fairly be maintained that after a careful consideration of Peter's character and history this objection ceases to be serious. The Apostle was impulsive and generous, too impulsive to harden into the slave of any stereotyped set of dogmatic phrases, too generous to ignore the power and truth of the Pauline teaching, or to resist its influence, either on account of an ancient grudge, or because of sectarian bitterness towards a teacher of another school, or through jealousy of a rival apostle. He was ever

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Cf. p. 46.

[2] Cf. p. 51.

[3] Gal. ii. 11.

disposed to surrender unconditionally to the last pressure brought to bear on him; witness the Denial, his relations with Cornelius, and the incidents at Antioch. At one moment, under Paul's influence, he mixed freely with Gentile Christians; the next he was captured by 'certain from James,' and reverted to Judaistic exclusiveness. There seems nothing improbable in the explanation that years later he met with Paul at Rome, shared with him the dangers of his closing years, and was once more mastered by the influence to which he had yielded for a time at Antioch.

Conclusion. Thus these objections do not seem fatal to the traditional view, and we may follow the opening verse, and the opinion known to have been held by the church since about A.D. 150, in accepting the Petrine authorship. The date will be about A.D. 64-66.

Current views. Writing in 1886, when our Epistle had long been subjected to careful examination in the full light of modern criticism, a distinguished opponent of the Petrine authorship admitted that the traditional view was still accepted by a great majority of scholars[1]. Its defenders have included Schleiermacher, Neander, Meyer, De Wette, Ewald, and in more recent times Weiss and Salmon, and within the last two or three years Professors Ramsay, Adeney (with some hesitation), Vernon Bartlet, and Zahn. Most of those who accept the Petrine authorship date the Epistle between A.D. 60 and 65; Weiss, however, about A.D. 54; and Ramsay, about A.D. 80.

The minority who reject the Petrine authorship are numerous and distinguished, including such names as Samuel Davidson, Hausrath, Pfleiderer, and Harnack. They assign the Epistle to various dates between A.D. 81 and 140. According to Harnack, it was probably written under Domitian, on account of the persecutions under that emperor, A.D. 81-96, but perhaps ten or twenty years earlier, and possibly by Paul, Peter's name having been introduced afterwards by mistake[1]. A date about A.D. 117 has been suggested on account of the persecutions under the emperor Hadrian, A.D. 117-138, referred to in the correspondence between him and Pliny, his governor in Bithynia. It has been suggested, very improbably, that Silvanus was the author; see on v. 12.

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[1] H. J. Holtzmann, *Einleitung* (*N. T. Introduction*), p. 520.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMPOSITION.

Place of writing. The line of argument and the evidence, traditional and otherwise, which suggest that 1 Peter was written about A. D. 60-65, would also indicate Rome as the place where it was composed. For, according to a widespread tradition, the Apostle was at Rome during this period. Moreover, v. 13 apparently refers to Rome as the place of composition under the mystic name 'Babylon.'

If, however, Babylon is taken literally it may mean either Babylon on the Euphrates, or a place of the same name in Egypt, near Cairo. There are objections to either view. According to Josephus, the Jewish colony at Babylon had ceased to exist before A.D. 60[2]. On the other hand, it is not likely that 'Babylon,' taken literally, would be used without qualification to denote any place other than the great city on the Euphrates. These difficulties confirm the view that we have here, as in Revelation, a mystical name for Rome.

Persons addressed. According to i. 1, the persons addressed are 'elect . . . sojourners of the Dispersion' in the north-eastern provinces of Asia Minor. This description, understood literally, would mean the Jewish Christians of that district; and we could easily understand that the Apostle of the Circumcision had occasion to address the Jewish Christians of a district in which the

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[1] *Chronologie.* [2] Under Caligula, A.D. 37-41, *Antiq.* xviii. 9.

Gentiles had been evangelized by Paul. The Christians may not have been separately organized into Jewish and Gentile churches, and yet the Jews may have remained, in many respects, a body apart. But there are no indications[1] in the Epistle of its having been addressed exclusively to Jews; indeed, there are several passages which seem to imply that it was written for Gentiles, e.g. 'which in time past were no people, but now are the people of God,' and 'for the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles[2].' Thus it is probable that the 'Dispersion' includes both Jewish and Gentile Christians; perhaps the members of some special church at Rome, Babylon, or elsewhere, in which Peter was particularly interested, and which had been scattered throughout Asia Minor by persecution; or, more probably, all the various churches of the provinces named. If A.D. 80, or any later date, is adopted, the persons addressed must have been the Christians of Asia Minor generally; the Jewish section did not survive so long as a distinct element in churches out of Syria[3].

Occasion. The occasion of the Epistle was some special outbreak of persecution, whereby the Christians of Asia Minor 'had been put to grief in manifold trials,' and were exposed to a 'fiery trial' which 'came upon' them 'to prove' them[4]. The Apostle wrote to comfort and encourage them in their distress, and to urge them to remain loyal to Christ in spite of persecution. Probably these persecutions were the sequel to that instituted by Nero at Rome. The enemies of the Christians would be encouraged by his hostility to the new faith, and the Roman officials in the provinces would seek to ingratiate themselves with the emperor by following his example.

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[1] Other than i. 1.

[2] ii. 10 (cf. Hos. i. 9), iv. 3: cf. also i. 14, 18; iii. 6.

[3] See also notes on i. 21; ii. 22.

[4] i. 6, iv. 4.

Those who reject the Petrine authorship have found the occasion of the Epistle in the persecution under Domitian, or in that under Hadrian.

LIFE OF ST. PETER.

Peter and his brother, together with the apostle Philip, belonged to Bethsaida of Galilee[1]. This may be the well-known Bethsaida Julias, on the north-east of the Sea of Galilee, and a little east of the Jordan. Strictly speaking, this was not in Galilee, but in Gaulonitis, in the tretrarchy of Herod Philip; but was sometimes spoken of loosely as in Galilee. In view of this difficulty as to the position of Bethsaida Julias, another, otherwise unknown, Bethsaida has been supposed to have existed in Galilee at the north-western end of the lake, and to have been the city of these apostles. At the beginning of our Lord's ministry Peter was married, had a house at Capernaum, and was a fisherman[2]. It was usual for young men to marry on becoming adults, so that these facts do not necessarily imply that Peter was more than twenty-five. But he has commonly been regarded as older, and though there is nothing very definite in favour of this view, it seems to be supported by the general impression made by the Gospel narratives. Amongst the Jews of those days, very young men were not readily accepted as leaders; yet Peter seems to have at once become the chief of the apostles, and, apparently as a matter of course, assumed an air of authority, even when speaking with Jesus himself. The most obvious explanation is that he was older than most of the rest, perhaps a man getting on for forty.

His early life had been passed on or near the shores of the Sea of Galilee, first at Bethsaida, then at Capernaum; there is nothing to shew when he left the one for the other. Probably his father was a fisherman, and he and his brother Andrew were brought up to that pursuit from boyhood. He had thus grown to middle age as a Galilæan Jew, no doubt a 'good Jew' in a rough and ready fashion, but not excessively scrupulous about all the minutiae of Pharisaic observances. The population round the lake was very mixed—Jews, Greeks, Syrians, Arabs, and Phœnicians, with a small leaven of Roman soldiers and officials. In catching and disposing of his fish, the future apostle would have to do with Roman customs officers, and with Syrian and Greek merchants. His boat would sometimes carry foreign travellers across the lake. In these and other ways he was in touch with the great world which lay outside the narrow limits of Judaism, and would thus be prepared to understand, accept, and promulgate a more liberal faith.

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[1] John i. 44; xii. 21.

[2] Mark i. 16–31.

He first appears in the Gospel narrative as a disciple of John the Baptist, brought to Jesus by his brother Andrew. We are not told that at this time he became a disciple of Jesus, but our Lord addressed him as 'Peter[1].' His actual discipleship dated from the time when Jesus called him and his brother Andrew, together with John and James, the sons of Zebedee, to leave their boats and nets and become fishers of men. The narrative in John explains their prompt obedience to this call. The honest fisherman's experience of business and official life had made him feel the need of reformation and a reformer for the world and for himself. Hence his ready response first to the Baptist's preaching, and then to the call of Christ. He would also be moved by the peculiar combination of authority and winsomeness in Jesus.

The new disciple was well qualified by his gifts and social position for his new vocation. In a sense he was a working man, living by manual labour and skill; and he followed a calling which made constant demands upon his courage and resource, and tended to develop self-reliance. But he and his brother owned their own boat, and lived in a house where they were able to entertain their Master and his disciples, so that they may be reckoned as belonging to the lower middle class. He had probably received some education in the contents and teaching of the Old Testament. The phrase translated 'unlearned and ignorant men[1]' would be more accurately rendered 'without theological training, and so laymen'; or, as we should say, they were not 'University men.' We might compare Peter and his brother Andrew to two devout Scotsmen, who were master and mate of a coasting-vessel of which they were part-owners.

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[1] John i. 40–42; Peter (Greek) = Κηφᾶς, (Aramaic) = Rock or Stone.

As we have already noticed, Peter took the lead amongst the disciples from the beginning and right through our Lord's ministry. He is always placed first in the lists of the apostles. He and James and John, and sometimes Andrew, formed an inner circle who remained with Jesus on special occasions when the other apostles were excluded, as for instance at the Transfiguration and in Gethsemane. Peter was constantly foremost in word and deed. It was he who tried to walk on the water; who proposed at the Transfiguration to make 'tabernacles' for Jesus and Moses and Elijah; who was the most vehement in his protestations that he would be faithful to the Master even unto death; who cut off the ear of the high priest's servant; who followed Jesus to the judgement-hall; and at the scene on the Sea of Galilee after the Resurrection left the boat and plunged into the water to come to Christ[2]. Peter almost always appears as the spokesman of the Twelve. It was he who replied to our Lord's question, 'Who do men say that I am?' by the decisive confession of faith, 'Thou art the Christ[1].' The Master himself solemnly and formally confirmed Peter in the position of chief of the apostles, when he named him 'Peter,' and declared that he was the 'rock' on which the church should be built[2]. Yet there was an unstable impulsiveness about the Apostle; he had hardly been addressed as the 'rock' when our Lord was compelled to say to him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumblingblock unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.' Later on his vehement protestations of devotion only lent the more painful emphasis to his denial of the Master.

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[1] *ἀγράμματοι . . . καὶ ἰδιῶται.* Acts iv. 13.

[2] John xxi. 7.

Two or three years of constant intimacy with our Lord and the disciples must have had a deep and lasting effect upon an impressionable character like that of Peter. Temporary lapses like the denial are no evidence to the contrary. This time of preparation was followed by the most momentous period the world has ever seen. Into a few short weeks were crowded the awful and solemn events of the entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the Passion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the descent of the Holy Spirit. Peter was both an eye-witness and a chief actor in these events; such experiences clinched the training of the years of the ministry, and interpreted afresh the teaching, life, and person of Christ. The inspiration and illumination of those weeks sent the Apostle forth as a missionary of the Cross, equipped with a wondrous energy, insight, and devotion. In the first preaching of the gospel at Jerusalem he was still the chief speaker; he too was the first to carry the word to the Gentiles, and to gather in their firstfruits in the conversion of Cornelius and his household. In these early days he still appears as the head of the church[3]. When Paul's work amongst the Gentiles outside Palestine raised the question as to whether such converts should conform to all the details of the Jewish law, Peter, like James, declared for the more liberal policy. 'Why tempt ye God,' said he, 'that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear[1]?' Later on he visited Paul at Antioch, and so far departed from strict Pharisaic rules as himself to eat with Gentiles; but some of the Judaizing party came to Antioch, 'certain came from James,' and under their influence he reverted to older habits—'when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision[2].' His unstable impulsiveness had survived years of training under the greatest Master that ever taught, and the most remarkable experiences that mortal man could well undergo. His vacillation broke up the good understanding between himself and Paul; and the Apostle of the Gentiles 'resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned.' Here we take leave of Peter, as far as the New Testament narrative is concerned. He is not mentioned in the account of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem[3]; probably he had left the city. Both the New Testament and tradition convey the impression that the leadership of the Jewish Christians had passed from Peter to James. The latter was the stronger and more consistent of the two; he was probably of a narrower temperament and therefore more popular with the Jewish party in the church; moreover he enjoyed the prestige of being the brother of the Lord.

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[1] Mark viii. 29, &c. [2] Matt. xvi. 18.
[3] Cf. Gal. ii. 7, 8.

There is a very large number of traditions about Peter, in which history and legend are so intertwined that they cannot be disentangled with any certainty. The Clementine literature[4] contains unhistorical legends concerning a series of contests between Peter and Simon Magus. Clement of Alexandria, writing about the same time[5], tells us that Peter's wife anticipated the modern Zenana Mission, thus: 'Peter and Philip had children, and both took about their wives, who helped them by ministering to women in their own homes [i.e. the women's]; by their means the doctrine of the Lord penetrated without scandal into the privacy of women's apartments.'

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[1] Acts xv. 10. [2] Gal. ii. 11, 12. [3] Acts xxi. 18.

[4] A collection of apocryphal writings written in the name of—but certainly not by—Clement of Rome, about A. D. 200.

[5] *Stromateis,* iii.

Tradition, however, does not throw any clear light on the questions when the Apostle left Jerusalem or where he went to. Apart from this Epistle, we last hear of him, in the New Testament, at Antioch, at variance with Paul. Probably, therefore, he did not stay long at Antioch on that occasion. He may have returned to Jerusalem, or may have at once journeyed further afield. It is a natural conjecture that, at some time or other, he visited the churches in the north-east of Asia Minor to which this Epistle is addressed; but it is nothing more than a conjecture. Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, writing about A.D. 180, speaks of Peter as having taught at Corinth[1]; and some have seen allusions to such teaching in 1 Cor. i. 12, iii. 22. But this tradition may have arisen from the anxiety of the Church of Corinth to identify itself with the chief of the apostles. If the term 'Babylon' in 1 Pet. v. 13 denotes either the great city on the Euphrates, or the town of that name near the modern Cairo, Peter must have exercised his ministry at one or other of these places[2].

But there is an early and widespread tradition that Rome was the scene of the last years or months of Peter's ministry, and of his martyrdom; and 'Babylon' is probably Rome. Indeed Eusebius[3] speaks of Peter as spending twenty years at Rome, and Jerome extends the period to twenty-five years; but these statements cannot be reconciled with the narrative in Acts, and must be due to some mistaken reckoning of Eusebius or his authority. But several early authorities[1] agree that Peter preached at Rome; and that, like Paul, he suffered martyrdom in the Neronian persecution. Origen[2] tells that, being condemned to be crucified, he asked to be allowed to suffer head downwards, because he was not worthy to die in the same way as his Master; and that his request was granted. A picturesque legend[3] tells us that the Christians of Rome, on the strength of our Lord's words, 'If they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another,' persuaded the Apostle to leave Rome to escape the persecution. But at the gate Christ met him; and Peter asked, 'Lord, whither goest thou?' (*Quo vadis?*) 'I go to Rome,' he replied, 'there to be crucified once more.' Peter went back into the city to await his martyrdom.

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[1] Ap. Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* ii. 25.

[2] Cf. p. 44 and note on v. 13.

[3] *Chronicon.*

Prof. Ramsay proposes to set aside the testimony of these authorities as to Peter's death under Nero, and to prolong his life as late as A.D. 80. But this seems to be a desperate expedient to preserve the Epistle for Peter, in spite of the evidence it gives—according to Prof. Ramsay—of having been written not earlier than about A.D. 80[4]. The evidence for Peter's preaching and death at Rome is very generally accepted as conclusive. Clement of Alexandria tells us that Peter's wife also suffered martyrdom.

An early second-century tradition[5] tells us that the second Gospel is Mark's record of the preaching of Peter. The contents of the Gospel are consistent with this account of its origin, and the tradition is accepted by very many scholars. In the first four centuries there were current several apocryphal works, bearing the name of the Apostle, viz. *The Acts of Peter*, *The Gospel according to Peter*, *The Doctrine* or *Preaching of Peter*, and *The Revelation of Peter*.

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[1] Dionysius of Corinth, l.c.; Tertullian, *Scorp.* 15; Caius, c. A.D. 220; Lactantius, c. A.D. 300; Eusebius, &c.

[2] Circa A.D. 250, ap. Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* iii. 1.

[3] Found in some editions of the works of St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, A.D. 374-397.

[4] Cf. p. 41.

[5] Papias, &c.

ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE.

The chief themes of the Epistle are summarized in iv. 19, 'Let them also which suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator.' It is an exhortation to patient endurance, consistent Christian life, and steadfast faith and hope in time of persecution. It deals at length and in detail with the principles of Christian conduct, and it and James are to the Epistles what the Sermon on the Mount is to the Gospels. It specially insists on Christ's sufferings as an example and ground of patience and hope; and on the imminence of the second coming as a further motive for cultivating those virtues. Like John it dwells on the new birth. But it is chiefly remarkable because it is saturated with Pauline thought; and because in it two of Paul's companions, Silvanus and Mark, are mentioned as associated with Peter. Thus the Epistle implies close union and complete harmony between the two apostles.

It contains the difficult passage as to the 'preaching to the spirits in prison,' iii. 19, which, with iv. 6, is often held to refer to an offer of salvation, after death, to those who died before the Incarnation.

I. i. 1, 2. Opening Salutation.

II. i. 3–12. Thanksgiving for, and exposition of, the privileges which Christians enjoy, even in the midst of tribulations.

III. i. 13—ii. 10. General exhortation to Christian consistency, in view of the privileges mentioned in the preceding section.

IV. ii. 11—iv. 11[1]. Detailed directions as to conduct, enforced by the example of Christ and the certainty of future bliss.

(*a*) Introductory summary (ii. 11, 12).

(*b*) Obedience to authority (13–17).

(*c*) Slaves. Christ the example of patient endurance of unmerited ill-treatment (18–25).

(*d*) Wives (iii. 1–6).

(*e*) Husbands (7).

(*f*) The duty of mutual kindliness amongst believers, and of patient endurance of abuse, enforced by the authority of Scripture (8–12).

(*g*) General exhortation to a consistent life, that their suffering may be undeserved like that of Christ; that they may be able to look forward with confident hope to 'the end of all things,' which is at hand. Doxology (iii. 13—iv. 11).

V. iv. 12—v. 11[1]. Further detailed directions.

(*a*) Restatement of **IV** (*g*), (iv. 12–19).

(*b*) The duty of elders (v. 1–4).

(*c*) The duty of the younger Christians (5^a).

(*d*) The general duty of humble, watchful, and steadfast faith (5^b–9).

(*e*) Prayer and Doxology (10, 11).

VI. v. 12–14. Closing Salutations.

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[1] Opening with 'Beloved,' and closing with Doxology.

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER

DATE AND AUTHORSHIP.

Written in the name of the Apostle. The Second Epistle of Peter is written in the name of the Apostle; thus it begins 'Symeon (R. V. text, *Simon*) Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.' Later on we read, 'Knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ signified unto me [1],' probably referring to our Lord's words as to the 'manner of death' by which Peter 'should glorify God [2].' Again, 'We were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard come out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount [3]'—an obvious reference to the Transfiguration, the only witnesses of which were 'Peter and James and John [4].' Again, 'This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you [5]'—doubtless a reference to the first Epistle, which is also written in the name of Peter, and very generally accepted as the actual work of the Apostle.

The simplest explanation of these passages, if we consider them entirely apart from all other evidence, is that the Epistle was written by Peter. But at the same time we must keep in mind the alternative that they may be due to the literary method of an author other than the Apostle, who thus asserted his conviction that he was expressing the mind of Peter[1].

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[1] Ch. i. 14.
[2] John xxi. 18, 19.
[3] Ch. i. 16–18.
[4] Mark ix. 2–8.
[5] Ch. iii. 1.

Relation to 1 Peter. In investigating the authorship of 2 Peter, we naturally begin by comparing it with 1 Peter. It is important to remember that the author of 2 Peter, whether the Apostle or somebody else, was acquainted with 1 Peter[2].

We have here, therefore, two short letters, one, as we have decided, the work of Peter. We have no other extant writings of that Apostle[3]; and we wish to determine whether these two short letters are by the same or by different authors. To decide such a question conclusively by purely internal evidence is a most difficult task. It is seldom possible to prove to the satisfaction of impartial judges that two such works either were, or were not, written by the same author. An adequate attempt at the solution of the problem would involve an exhaustive examination of the ideas, style, and vocabulary of both, down to the least important minutiae; and we have not space for such a process. We must confine ourselves to a general statement of the facts, and of the way in which they are interpreted by opposing critics.

Where we have two religious works in the same language, and the author of the one was acquainted with the other, there must necessarily be resemblances between the two; and even a considerable amount of resemblance is not strong evidence that both were written by the same author. On the other hand, two works by the same author are not likely to be written in exactly the same style, or to express precisely the same ideas. Even striking differences may not prove that two works were written by different authors. We have to look at the character of the resemblances and differences.

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[1] Cf. p. 9.

[2] 2 Pet. iii. 1.

[3] There are of course abstracts of his speeches in Acts.

First as to resemblances, of which we will give a few specimens. There are some which are pretty obvious, e.g. both Epistles speak of 'Noah and seven others' escaping the Flood[1].

Certain striking words and phrases occur in both Epistles and nowhere else in the New Testament, e.g. 'virtue' used of God[2], 'to be an eyewitness[3],' and 'eyewitnesses[4],' 'without spot or blemish[5].' Such resemblances are fully explained by the fact that the author of 2 Peter was acquainted with 1 Peter; and it has been maintained that they are more consistent with the use by one writer of the work of another, than with the composition of both Epistles by the same person. There are, however, details of idiom which have been adduced in favour of the Petrine authorship, but they are too slight and few to carry any weight.

Of the very numerous differences, we can only cite two. The term 'Saviour[6]' occurs five times in 2 Peter, and not at all in 1 Peter. The two Epistles use almost entirely different sets of names and titles of our Lord. 1 Peter has 'Christ' or 'Jesus Christ[7]'; while 2 Peter usually has '(our) Lord Jesus Christ' or 'our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' and, once each, 'Jesus Christ,' 'our God and Saviour Jesus Christ,' and 'Jesus our Lord[8].' It is generally recognized that the differences of style and ideas make it very difficult to ascribe the two Epistles to the same author. Neither was this difficulty first discovered by modern critics, for Jerome tells us that, in his time, there were many who denied that the Epistle was Peter's, on account of the differences in style between it and 1 Peter[1].

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[1] 1 Pet. iii. 20; 2 Pet. ii. 5.

[2] *ἀρετή*, 1 Pet. ii. 9, R. V. 'excellencies,' 2 Pet. i. 3; and also in its usual sense, 2 Pet. i. 5 and Phil. iv. 8, and nowhere else in the N. T.

[3] *ἐποπτεύειν*, R. V. 'behold,' 1 Pet. ii. 12, iii. 2.

[4] *ἐπόπται*, 2 Pet. i. 16.

[5] 1 Pet. i. 19 *ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου*, 2 Pet. iii. 14 *ἄσπιλοι καὶ ἀμώμητοι*: cf. 2 Pet. ii. 13, 'spots and blemishes,' *σπῖλοι καὶ μῶμοι*.

[6] *σωτήρ*.

[7] 'Jesus' in A. V. of v. 10, 14, is a misreading.

[8] 2 Pet. i. 1 (but cf. R. V. marg.), 2.

Relation to Jude. There is a very close resemblance between 2 Pet. ii. 1—iii. 3 and Jude 4–18, as will be seen from the accompanying table of the corresponding portions of the two passages. Words identical in the Greek are printed in italics; where the same Greek words are used in different forms an asterisk (*) is added; and clauses occurring in one passage only are placed in square brackets [ ]. In a few instances the Revised Version, and even English idiom, have been departed from, in order to make the resemblances and differences correspond more closely with the Greek.

Jude.	2 Peter.
4. (*a*) For there are certain men crept in *privily*, (*d*) even they *who* were *of old* set forth unto this *sentence*, [ungodly men,] (*c*) turning the grace of our God into *lasciviousness*, (*b*) and *denying* our only *Master* and Lord, Jesus Christ.	ii. 1–3. (*a*) [But there arose also false prophets among the people], as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall *privily* bring in destructive heresies, (*b*) *denying* even *the Master* that bought them, [bringing upon themselves swift destruction.] (*c*) And many shall follow their *lasciviousnesses ;* [by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you :] (*d*) *whose sentence* now from *of old* lingereth not,
[5. Destruction of the Israelites in the Wilderness.]	[and their destruction slumbereth not.]

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[1] 'Plerisque eius esse negatur, propter styli cum priore dissonantiam.'

Jude.	2 Peter.
6. And *angels* which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation,	4. For if God spared not *angels* when they sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus,
he hath *kept* in everlasting bonds under *darkness unto judgement* of the great day.	and committed them to chains[1] of *darkness*, to be *kept unto judgement.*
	[5. Noah and the Flood.]
7. (*a*) Even as *Sodom and Gomorrah*,	6. (*a*) And the *cities* of *Sodom and Gomorrah*,
[and the *cities* about them, having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication, and gone after strange flesh,]	(*c*) he condemned with an overthrow, turning them into ashes,
(*b*) are set forth as an *example*,	(*b*) having made them an *example*
(*c*) suffering the punishment of eternal fire.	[unto those that should live ungodly;]
	[7-9. Deliverance of Lot &c.;]
8. Yet in like manner these also in their dreamings *defile the flesh*,	10. but chiefly them that walk after *the flesh* in the lust of *defilement*,
and set at nought *dominion*,	and despise *dominion.*
	[Daring, selfwilled,]
and *rail at dignities.*	they tremble not *to rail at dignities*:
9. But Michael the arch*angel*, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst *not bring** *against* him *a railing judgement**, but said, *The Lord** rebuke thee.	11. whereas *angels*, though greater in might and power, *bring not a railing judgement against** *them before the Lord.**
10. *But these*	12. *But these*,
(*b*) *rail* at whatsoever things they know not:	(*a*) *as creatures without reason*,
[and what they understand *animally*],	[born mere *animals* to be taken and destroyed,]
(*a*) *as* the *creatures without reason*,	(*b*) *rail*ing in matters whereof they are ignorant,
(*c*) *in* these things are they *destroyed.*	(*c*) shall *in* their destroying surely be *destroyed.*

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[1] So R. V. marg.; R. V. text, 'pits.'

Jude.	2 Peter.
11. Woe unto them!	15, 16. [forsaking the right way, they *erred*,]
for they went *in the way of* [Cain, and ran riotously in the *error* of]	having followed *the way of*
Balaam for *hire*,	*Balaam* the son of Beor, [who loved the *hire* of wrong-doing; but he was rebuked for his own transgression: a dumb ass spake with man's voice and stayed the madness of the prophet.]
[and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.]	
12, 13. *These are* they who are *spots*[1] *in* your *love-feasts when they feast with you*,	17^{a}. *These are* 13^{b}. *spots* and blemishes, revelling *in* their *love-feasts when they feast with you;*
[shepherds that without fear feed themselves;]	Cf. 2 Pet. ii. 3^{a}.
clouds *without water*, carried along *by* the winds;	17. springs *without water*, and mists driven *by* a storm;
[autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; (13) wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars,]	
for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved for ever.	*for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved.*
[14, 15. Quotation from 'Enoch.']	
16. [These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts,]—and their mouth speaketh *great swelling words*,—	18. For, uttering *great swelling words* of vanity,
[shewing respect of persons for the sake of advantage.]	[they entice in the *lusts* of the flesh, by lasciviousness, those who are just escaping from them that live in error.]
17. But ye, *beloved*,	iii. 1, 2. This is now, *beloved*,

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[1] R. V. marg.; in R. V. text, 'hidden rocks.'

JUDE.	2 PETER.
	[the second epistle that I write unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance;]
remember ye *the words which have been spoken before by the*	that ye should *remember the words which were spoken before by the*
	[holy prophets, and the commandment]
apostles of our *Lord* Jesus Christ;	*of the Lord* and Saviour through your *apostles:*
18. [how that they said to you,]	3. [knowing this first, that]
In the last time there *shall* be *mockers*, *walking after their* own ungodly *lusts.*	*in the last* days *mockers shall* come with mockery, *walking after* their own *lusts.*

A careful examination of this table will shew that either the author of 2 Peter had read Jude or vice versa. Even here there is some measure of difficulty in determining which is the original, the more so as the decision of this question has some bearing on the problems of the date and authorship of the two Epistles. There is always a temptation to interpret ambiguous evidence in favour of one's own theories. Thus Jude 7, 13, have been regarded as expansions of 2 Pet. ii. 6, 17, and, therefore, as evidence for the priority of 2 Peter. But, on the whole, there is more in 2 Peter that looks like expansion; and it is comparatively easy to explain many of the differences as omissions or alterations from Jude made by the author of 2 Peter[1]. In 2 Peter, verse 11 of chapter ii. is unintelligible apart from the parallel passage, Jude 9; it is not clear who are meant by 'them,' possibly the sinners of the previous verses. But if so why should 'angels' be brought in as their accusers? This verse is at once explained by a comparison with its parallel; it is an adaptation of Jude 9 to a slightly different context. The episode of Michael and Moses was taken from an apocryphal work; 2 Peter was anxious to avoid any reference to so doubtful a source of information, and so generalized the idea. Similarly 2 Peter omits the quotation from the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* given in Jude 14, 15. Again, if 2 Pet. iii. 2, 3, were the original, there is no reason why Jude 17, 18, should omit reference to the 'prophets' and the 'commandment.' But if Jude were the original some such alterations as those made in 2 Peter would be necessary. The language in Jude, 'Remember ... the words ... spoken ... by the apostles ... how that they said,' implied that the author was not an apostle; and it would be natural for Peter, or any one writing in his name, to modify the verse so as to remove this implication. 'Your apostles,' for instance, might denote a group to which Peter did not belong. An exhaustive comparison of the two Epistles leaves a decided impression that Jude is the original. It is true that a respectable array of scholars might be cited in support of the opposite view[1], but the weight of authority is in favour of the priority of Jude[2]. The author of 2 Peter may have worked from a MS. of Jude, or from his recollection of that Epistle, probably sometimes from the one and sometimes from the other.

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[1] Cf. Commentary on 2 Peter.

Relations with the rest of the New Testament. There are a few slight parallels between our Epistle and books of the New Testament other than 1 Peter and Jude; they are not, however, enough to suggest any direct literary connexion. For instance, the Greek expression for 'the reward of iniquity[3]' is only found in Acts and in this Epistle. There are also other points of contact with the Acts and the Pastoral Epistles; e.g. the terms 'godly' (adj.), 'godliness[4]' only occur in the Acts, the Pastoral

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[1] e.g. Lumby (*Speaker's Comm.*), Spitta, Zahn.

[2] e.g. Chase (Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*), Harnack, Holtzmann, Salmon, Weiss.

[3] Acts i. 18; 2 Pet. ii. 13, 15.

[4] *εὐσεβής, εὐσέβεια.*

Epistles, and 2 Peter[1]. 'Saviour' is a favourite word in this Epistle and in the Pastorals; it also occurs in Luke and Acts, very rarely elsewhere.

Relations with other early literature. It has been maintained that the author of 2 Peter was acquainted with the works of the Jewish Alexandrian philosopher Philo[2], and also with those of Josephus[3]; but in neither case does the evidence seem to amount to a proof. Parallels have been pointed out between our Epistles and Hermas, Clement of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenæus, and other writers of the second century; but they are similar in character to those cited between James and the literature of that period, and do not afford appreciable evidence that 2 Peter was known to any of these writers.

Early and other testimony. There is practical agreement that 'no certain trace' of this Epistle can be found until far on in the third century[4]. It is not included in the Peshitto or Syriac Version, or in the earlier editions of the Old Latin Version[5], or in the Muratorian Canon[6]. There is no evidence to shew that it was known to Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria[7], or Cyprian. Hippolytus, however, seems to have been acquainted with it. Origen is the first writer who connects Peter's name with the Epistle, and he speaks of the Petrine authorship as doubtful[8]. Eusebius includes it amongst the disputed books[1]. Didymus, head of the catechetical school of Alexandria in the second half of the fourth century[2], speaks of the Epistle as spurious and not in the Canon[3]. Jerome mentions that in his time it was rejected by many.

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[1] 2 Pet. i. 3, 6, 7, ii. 9, iii. 11. 'To be godly' and 'godly' (adv.) only occur in Acts and the Pastorals.

[2] Circa B. C. 20 to A. D. 50. Cf. Salmon, *N. T. Introd.* pp. 549 f.

[3] Circa A. D. 95. Cf. Abbott and Farrar, *Expositor*, 1882, and Hatch, *Encyc. Brit.*, 'Epistles of Peter.'

[4] So Weiss, Eng. tr., ii. 169.

[5] Westcott, *N. T. Canon*, pp. 260 f.

[6] Which, however, also omits 1 Peter.

[7] Cl. Al. is said to have commented on the 'Catholic Epistles,' but it is not expressly stated that this term included 2 Peter. Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* vi. 14.

[8] Ap. Eusebius, ibid. 25.

Our Epistle is found in the various MSS. of the Catholic Epistles, including the oldest; it was recognized as canonical by the Council of Carthage, A. D. 397; and from this time onwards was very generally accepted in the West, in Egypt, Palestine, and at Constantinople. Probably the recognition by these various authorities involved an otiose assent to the Petrine authorship; but there is no evidence that it was due to any deliberate critical judgement. In Syria and elsewhere in the East it was not fully accepted for centuries.

With the revival of criticism at the Reformation, the old doubts asserted themselves afresh, and the Petrine authorship was rejected by Calvin[4] and Erasmus.

Internal evidence. The Epistle, as we have seen, is expressly written in the name of the Apostle. Otherwise the contents do not point to authorship by Peter. We have already mentioned that the style is different from that of 1 Peter. A further difficulty is the reference in iii. 15, 16, to 'all the epistles' of Paul as misinterpreted 'like the other scriptures.' It is extremely difficult to believe that during the lifetime of Peter, the Pauline Epistles had already been placed on a level with the Old Testament.

Conclusion as to authorship. Let us briefly estimate the conclusions indicated by the evidence. On the one hand, the Epistle is written in the name of Peter. It is so frank and spontaneous, so earnest and spiritually-minded, that it was evidently written in perfect good faith. It has, however, been pointed out[1] that some one other than the Apostle might write in his name, as a mere matter of literary method, without any intention to deceive.

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[1] *Antilegomena, Ch. Hist.* iii. 25.

[2] Died in A. D. 394 or 399, at the age of more than 83.

[3] At the end of his commentary on the Epistle, extant only in a Latin version.

[4] Calvin, however, considers that though 2 Peter was not actually written by the Apostle, it is Petrine in the sense of expressing his teaching.

All the other important evidence is strongly against the Petrine authorship. Passing over less serious difficulties, we may enumerate the use made of Jude; the difference of style from 1 Peter; the reference to a number of Pauline Epistles as 'scripture'; the silence of the first two centuries, and the doubts of the third and fourth. The use of Jude, indeed, is rather a stumbling-block to modern sentiment than a weighty objection. 'The literary conscience was not yet aware of the sin of plagiarism,' and it appears from the indebtedness of 1 Peter to the Pauline Epistles that the chief of the apostles was sometimes dependent upon others for ideas and their expression. The departure from the style of 1 Peter might be due to the assistance of a secretary in writing 2 Peter. But there seems no satisfactory explanation of the reference to the Pauline Epistles as Scripture, if our Epistle was the work of Peter.

The absence of early external evidence has sometimes been explained by the brevity of the Epistle. But Jude is much shorter, and Jude was a far less important personage than Peter; yet the external evidence for Jude is much stronger than that for 2 Peter. It has been suggested that our Epistle was eclipsed, as it were, by 1 Peter, and therefore ignored. The argument is not very plausible. Philemon, for instance, is even shorter than Jude, yet it was not eclipsed by the thirteen Pauline Epistles; and the external evidence for it is far more abundant than for 2 Peter. It is, no doubt, possible that a short letter of Peter may have been lost sight of for a time, and discovered about the end of the second century; but it is clear from the doubts of the early church that when 2 Peter made its appearance, it was not accompanied by any credentials which could establish its Petrine authorship. But, as Professor Salmon says[1], 'Since the end of the fourth century no new revelation has been made to enlighten the Church on the subject of the Canon; and therefore we can have no infallible certainty on matters about which learned men of that age thought they had not evidence to warrant a confident assertion.' The acceptance of 2 Peter by various sections of the church after the fourth century establishes its canonical authority, but adds nothing to the evidence for the Petrine authorship. Such acceptance was not due to the further prosecution, but to the abandonment of critical investigation. Naturally the conventional title of an epistle beginning 'Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,' was the 'Second Epistle of Peter,' and the title 'Peter' is used by writers like Origen[2] and Didymus, who rejected the Petrine authorship. Popular criticism is always eager to take the line of least resistance, to connect documents with distinguished names, to evade the discomfort of uncertainty, and to treat conventional phrases as literal statements of fact. Moreover, the principle that apostolic authorship was a condition of canonicity was two-edged. Popular logic would readily draw the conclusion that since 2 Peter was practically recognized as canonical, it must have been written by the Apostle. In the absence of any commanding scholarly authority, the popular assumption that Peter wrote both the Epistles which bore his name passed unchallenged till it attained the dubious dignity of a tradition.

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[1] General Introduction, p. 10.

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[1] *N. T. Introduction* [3], p. 500.

[2] Only in the untrustworthy Latin translations of Rufinus, through which, however, Origen's views would be known to Western readers.

On the whole, the available evidence is against the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter; but the view of Calvin, revived by some modern critics, that the actual author based his work on sayings or writings of the Apostle, is by no means impossible.

Conclusion as to date. If the Petrine authorship were accepted, the reference to the Pauline Epistles and to 1 Peter and the use of Jude would require a date at the very end of the Apostle's life, i.e. about A.D. 66. But these features are more easily understood if the book was written still later, i.e. some time in the second century. The external evidence shews that it was in existence before the close of that century, hence the Epistle is very commonly dated between A.D. 100 and 175.

Personality of the author. In connexion with 1 Peter a sketch of the Apostle's life was given. If 2 Peter had a different author, we can only say that he was some devout Christian and careful student of apostolic literature. His use of Old Testament history by no means proves him to be a Jew. If we ascribe the Epistle to some one other than Peter, we have no more right to brand the author as a 'forger' than we have to style Peter a 'dishonest plagiarist,' if we accept his authorship.

Current views. The Petrine authorship has been defended—not in all cases as certain, but as at any rate probable—by a number of critics, e.g. Alford, Olshausen, and Keil, and, more recently, Lumby, Salmon, Warfield, Spitta, and Zahn. Those who take this view usually date the Epistle in the closing years of Peter's life, and after 1 Peter. Spitta, however, places 2 Peter before both 1 Peter and Jude. Some critics, like Weiss, leave the authorship an open question. Others propose to sacrifice part in order to save the rest, e.g. Prof. Vernon Bartlet suggests that 2 Pet. ii. 1—iii. 7 may be a later addition to an epistle actually written by the Apostle. But the majority of recent critics follow Calvin and Erasmus in rejecting the Petrine authorship. Ewald assigned the

Epistle to the end of the first century; Bleek, Ramsay, Hausrath, Ritschl, Adeney, &c., to about A. D. 100–150; Harnack to about A. D. 160–175. It is usually regarded as later than 1 Peter.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMPOSITION.

Place of writing. If Peter be accepted as the author, the Epistle will have been written at Rome, like 1 Peter, on similar grounds. If it is not by the Apostle, it was probably composed by a member of one of the churches for whose benefit it was intended, i. e. in Asia Minor[1].

To whom addressed. Although the opening salutation is general, 'to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us,' later on it is implied that the letter was written for the recipients of 1 Peter—'This is now . . . the second epistle that I write unto you[2].' It professes therefore to be addressed to 'the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia[3]'. If Peter was the author this description may be taken in the same sense as for 1 Peter. Otherwise it may be merely part of the literary setting. Certainly the Epistle seems intended for Gentile Christians; there is nothing to suggest that it was meant specially for Jews. It is clearly addressed to Greek-speaking communities acquainted with the Pauline Epistles and with 1 Peter, and fully recognizing the authority of both apostles, but apparently not familiar with Jude. These communities had been evangelized by a group of apostles which did not include Peter[4]. They were troubled by false teachers similar to those referred to in the letters in the Apocalypse to the seven churches of Asia Minor. Probably, therefore, it was first circulated in Asia Minor.

Occasion. The Epistle is anxious to promote the general edification of its readers; but it was specially written to deal with two particular difficulties. First, the churches addressed were disturbed by false teachers, who apparently taught some form of Antinomian Gnosticism, such as is known to have been current in Asia Minor in the second century, having grown from germs referred to in Colossians and the Apocalypse. Their gnosticism consisted in a claim to superior enlightenment, *gnosis*, in virtue of which they set aside the authority of the church and the restraints of Christian morality[1]. They thus became Antinomian, i. e. they set themselves in opposition to[2] the law[3] of faith. A tendency to Antinomianism has always accompanied the undue emphasizing of Paul's teaching on justification, and these false teachers claimed his authority for their erroneous doctrines[4]. Perhaps the idea of writing this letter was suggested to the author by his meeting with the Epistle of Jude, and being struck with its suitability to the churches of his own time and country. It is even possible that his copy of Jude did not contain the opening verses, and was not described as Jude's. The author may have been told or may have imagined that Peter was the author of Jude, and thus have been led to write his expanded version in the name of the chief of the apostles.

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[1] See next paragraph.

[2] 2 Pet. i. 1, iii. 1.

[3] 1 Pet. i. 1. Cf. p. 44.

[4] 2 Pet. iii. 2.

secon.

ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

THE use made by 2 Peter of Jude is an interesting example of the introduction into a work, without acknowledgement, of a new edition of a portion of an older work, a common habit of ancient Eastern authors. The object in the present instance was to repeat and emphasize the protest of Jude against Antinomianism[1]. The Epistle is also remarkable for the stress laid on 'knowledge'; for its teaching on inspiration, i. 20, 21; its reference to the Transfiguration, i. 16, 17; its treatment of the difficulties raised by the delay of the Second Coming, iii. 1–10; its picture of the close of the present dispensation by the destruction of the universe by fire, iii. 7, 10, 12; and its reference to the Pauline Epistles as canonical and sometimes obscure, iii. 15, 16.

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[1] 2 Pet. ii. 10, 19, &c.

[2] *Anti.*

[3] *Nomos.*

[4] 2 Pet. iii. 15.

i. 1, 2. Salutation.

3–11. Preliminary general exhortation to steadfastness, and an intelligent, consistent Christian life.

12–18. Peter confirms the readers in their faith, relying on his authority as an eye-witness of the Transfiguration.

19–21. How that faith is also confirmed by the Old Testament, properly understood.

ii. 1—iii. 4. St. Jude's warning to the Antinomians is repeated, and applied to the circumstances of the readers of the Epistle. Examples from the Old Testament of false teachers and sinners, and their doom, and the deliverance of the faithful. Fallen angels. The Antediluvians and Noah, Sodom and Gomorrah and Lot. Description of the false teachers, who are compared to Balaam, and will incur a similar doom. The disastrous consequences of falling from grace.

The Epistle is written to remind its readers of the teaching of the prophets and apostles, especially the prediction that immoral scoffers would arise.

iii. 4–9. The argument of the scoffers and its refutation.

10–13. The Day of Judgement and its sequel; such a prospect should be an incentive to holy living.

14–18. Final exhortation to consistency and steadfastness reinforced by the authority of the Pauline Epistles, properly understood.

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[1] See on Jude.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF JOHN

Date and Authorship.

Anonymous. The First Epistle of John is entirely anonymous; it does not in any way, either directly or indirectly, claim to be written by the apostle John. But the title of the Epistle in the oldest, fourth-century, manuscripts of the Greek text is Ἰωάννου α', or 1 John.

Relation to other Johannine books. In tone, ideas, style, and vocabulary our Epistle very closely resembles the fourth Gospel and 2 and 3 John. It is pervaded by the same earnest, affectionate spirit, and displays the same interest in the doctrine of the Person of Christ. It pursues the same method of developing an idea by a series of short co-ordinate clauses, similar in form, but presenting different aspects of the same truth by slight variations of expression—a method which has much in common with the parallelism of the Psalms and other ancient Hebrew poetry; e. g.—

1 John iv. 7, 8, 11, 12. 'Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God;

'And every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God.

'He that loveth not knoweth not God;

'For God is love.'

'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.'

'If we love one another, God abideth in us.'

John i. 1–3. 'In the beginning was the Word,

'And the Word was with God,

'And the word was God.

'The same was in the beginning with God.

'All things were made by him;

'And without him was not anything made that hath been made.'

Similarly there is a constant tendency in both Gospels and Epistles to recur to an idea after an interval, expressing it in the same or slightly different words, e.g.—

1 John ii. 6. 'He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked.'

iii. 6. 'Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.'

iii. 24. 'He that keepeth his commandments abideth in him.'

John xv. 4. 'The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine.'

5. 'He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit.'

10. 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.'

The strong emphasis laid alike by the Gospels and Epistles on the same great themes is shewn by the frequent use of such key-words as:—

NUMBER OF TIMES USED IN:

	Gospel.	*Epistles.*	*Rev.*	*Rest of N. T.*
World (κόσμος)	78	23	3	80
Life (ζωή)	41	13	17	76
Death (θάνατος)	8	6	19	83
Truth (ἀλήθεια)	25	20	...	66
Falsehood (ψεῦδος)	1	2	3	4
Light (φῶς)	22	6	3	41
Darkness (σκοτία)	8	5	...	2
Darkness (σκότος)	1	1	...	30
Genuine (R. V. 'true'), (ἀληθινός)	9	4	10	4
Love, *v.* (ἀγαπᾶν)	36	31	4	65
Love, *n.* (ἀγάπη)	7	18	2	89
Love, *v.* (φιλεῖν)	13	...	2	10
Hate, *v.* (μισεῖν)	11	5	4	20

It will be noted that both Gospel and Epistles are alike fond of contrasts, Life and Death, Light and Darkness, Love and Hate; and prefer to dwell on the positive ideas, Life, Light, and Love.

Another feature common to these works is the slight use made of the Old Testament. The Gospel contains fewer Old Testament phrases and quotations in proportion to its length than any other of the longer books of the New Testament; the Epistles shew hardly any trace of the direct study of the Old Testament; they might almost have been written by some one who had never read any portion of it, but had heard something of its history and teaching, so that he could refer to such an incident as the murder of Abel by Cain[1].

Prima facie, at any rate, such resemblances as have been described and illustrated leave a very strong impression that the fourth Gospel and the Epistles are the work of the same author.

When, however, we compare the Epistles with Revelation, the result is entirely different. There are, indeed, resemblances; these are illustrated by the table on the vocabulary of the Johannine books given above. The same table also exemplifies the striking differences between the vocabularies of the Revelation and the other books. Revelation also has its characteristic words; e.g. 'endurance,' *hupomone*, occurs in it seven times, and is common elsewhere in the New Testament; 'Almighty,' *pantokrator*, occurs in it nine times, and also once in a quotation from Isaiah in 2 Cor. vi. 18; neither of these words occurs in any of the other Johannine books. Again, the Greek of the Gospels and Epistles is very simple but also grammatical and idiomatic, that of Revelation is the broken Greek of a foreigner who has learnt the language imperfectly. The Epistles, as we have seen, shew scant traces of the literary use of the

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[1] 1 John iii. 12; but cf. Hühn, *A. T. Citate*, p. 270.

Old Testament, but a large part of Revelation is a mosaic of phrases from the Hebrew Scriptures. The Gospels and Epistles are practically Pauline, a natural development from the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles; the Revelation is the most Judaizing document in the New Testament. As far as purely internal evidence is concerned, the prima facie impression, at any rate, is that the Revelation was written by some one other than the author of the rest of the Johannine books. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 248–265, insists at some length on the differences between the Revelation and the other books as a reason for ascribing the former to another 'John,' not the Apostle[1].

Relation to the rest of the New Testament. The theological standpoint of the Epistle is that of the Pauline teaching in its final form. The author moves in this sphere of ideas with an ease, freedom, and originality which imply familiar acquaintance and mature reflection. He assumes the Pauline positions as to the offer of the Gospel on the same terms to Jew and Gentile, as to the freedom of Christians from the obligations of the law[2], and as to the Person and atoning work of Christ. The author of 1 John probably did not make literary use of Paul's Epistles in writing his own, but he must have written some time after that apostle. Parallels with the other books of the New Testament are such as would arise from the authors' independent study of primitive Christian teaching.

Early testimony. Passing over parallels of doubtful significance, we meet with the first certain traces of our Epistle in Polycarp and Papias. Thus 1 John iv. 2, 3:

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[1] Ap. Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* vii. 25.

[2] This point is more important here than in reference to James; the latter may have been written to a purely Jewish church, which took the law for granted, and was ignorant of any controversy on the subject; but 1 John cannot have been written exclusively to Jews.

'Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which confesseth not[1] Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist.' Polycarp[2] vii: 'For every one who does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is antichrist: and every one who does not confess the testimony of the cross is of the devil.'

Eusebius[3] tells us that Papias[4] made use of our Epistle, but does not state that he spoke of it as John's. These references, however, shew that 1 John was in existence early in the second century, certainly before A.D. 120. The Epistle, however, is expressly referred to as John's by the various authorities of the end of the second century and the beginning of the third, viz. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, and the Muratorian Canon. It was included in the Old Latin and Peshitto or Syriac Versions; it is placed by Eusebius among the *Homologoumena*, or books universally accepted, and is spoken of in similar terms by Jerome. With two or three very insignificant exceptions it was always accepted as canonical and Johannine until the Reformation.

Internal evidence. The errors attacked in 1 John were akin to those taught by various heretics of the second century. The emphasis laid on the coming of Christ 'in the flesh[5]' suggests the teaching that denied the reality of the Incarnation, and asserted that Christ only appeared to be man; that, for instance, the Spirit descended upon the man Jesus at his baptism, and left him before his crucifixion[6]. The distinction between 'sin unto death' and 'sin not unto death[7]' might refer to the idea that sin after baptism could not be forgiven.

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[1] There is a various reading 'annulleth.'

[2] The authorship of this letter by Polycarp has been challenged, but is now generally accepted.

[3] *Ch. Hist.* iii. 29. [4] See p. 38.

[5] 1 John iv. 2, 3.

[6] Docetism, one aspect of Gnosticism. 1 John v. 16.

Other features also shew that the Epistle was not written in the very early days of the church. 'It is the last hour.' There were those who sought to lead Christians astray; and antichrist, whose coming had been long looked for, was 'now . . . in the world already.' Indeed, there were 'many antichrists[1].'

Conclusion as to date and authorship. In view of the striking resemblance between 1 John and the fourth Gospel, and also of the marked contrast between it and Revelation, a complete discussion would consider all the evidence as to the two other books. Such a discussion would be out of place here, and the reader is referred to the volumes dealing with the other Johannine writings.

The evidence directly connected with 1 John is quite consistent with authorship by the Apostle; the external evidence distinctly favours that view, and the internal raises no strong objection. It is altogether reasonable to suppose that views which were prevalent in the second century had already made their appearance at the close of the Apostolic Age.

If therefore we may here assume that John wrote the fourth Gospel, we shall also ascribe to him this Epistle.

It is not quite certain which of the two books is the earlier; probably they were written about the same time, so that an approximate date, A.D. 90–100, if accepted for the Gospel, will also hold good for the Epistle.

Current views. The majority of scholars hold that the two works were written by the same author, and that the Gospel is the earlier. As a rule, therefore, acceptance or denial of Johannine authorship, if held for the one, is extended to the other. So, too, those who ascribe the Gospel to John the Presbyter, or some John other than the son of Zebedee, usually hold the same view as to the Epistle[2].

As to date, some have placed 1 John shortly before

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[1] 1 John ii. 18, 26. iv. 3.

[2] Cf. vol. on Gospel of John.

A.D. 70, on the altogether insufficient ground that 'the last hour' may refer to the last days of Jerusalem, as the closing period of the old dispensation. On the other hand, it has been placed in the last half of the second century. But, for the most part, the dates assigned to the Epistle range between A.D. 80 and A.D. 120. Those who ascribe it to John date it towards the close of his life, about A.D. 80–100; those who reject the Johannine authorship still date the book in the same period or somewhat later.

Circumstances of Composition.

Place of writing. The Epistle itself neither states nor implies anything as to the place where it was written, but tradition suggests Ephesus, where John is said to have spent the closing years of his life.

To whom addressed. The absence of any address, introductory greeting, or closing salutation has suggested that 1 John is not a letter but a treatise; or that, if it is a letter, it was written for all Christians, and not for any particular church or churches. But 1 John is throughout an earnest personal appeal to those with whom the writer was well acquainted, and in whom he took a deep interest. He writes to 'my little children[1]'; he knows the spiritual condition of various classes amongst his readers, that the fathers 'know him which is from the beginning,' the young men 'have overcome the evil one,' the little children 'know the Father'; and knows also that there are those who seek to lead them astray[2]. He seems, therefore, to be writing for some church or churches with which he was personally connected. If John wrote the Epistle at Ephesus, it was probably written for the Christians of Asia Minor. Augustine, indeed, according to the extant text of his works, quotes 1 John iii. 2 as being said by John in the Epistle to the Parthians[1]; but this destination is most improbable in itself, and is not corroborated by any important authorities. Hence it is commonly supposed that 'Parthians' is a blunder of a copyist, corresponding to a misprint; or that Augustine made a mistake.

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[1] 1 John ii. 1.

[2] 1 John ii. 13, 26.

Occasion. The Epistle was written to combat the errors as to the Person of Christ, and the Christian life and hope, which later on became prevalent and defined under the names of Gnosticism, Doceticism, Montanism, &c.[2] Moreover, as controversy is usually fatal to mutual good feeling amongst Christians, the circumstances gave special occasion for John to insist upon his favourite truth that Christians should love one another. It has been suggested that the Epistle was written as a commentary on some of the ideas of the Gospel, and was perhaps intended to be circulated with it.

LIFE OF ST. JOHN.

Here, again, the reader is referred to the volumes on the Gospel and Revelation for a fuller treatment of the subject, since 1 John and the fourth Gospel stand in practically the same relation to the character, life, and work of the Apostle. Here, therefore, very little needs to be said. Like most of the apostles, John was a Galilæan; like Peter and Andrew and his own brother James, he was part-owner of a fishing-boat, and worked and traded as a fisherman; if, as is often supposed, he was first cousin to Jesus[3], this relationship is a point of resemblance between him and James and Jude, the brethren of the Lord. Like Peter and Andrew and his own brother James, he was first a disciple of the Baptist, and then one of the inner circle of the apostles of our Lord. Hence much that has been said of the early life of Peter, and James the brother of our Lord, and of Peter's life during the ministry of Christ, will also apply to John.

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[1] *Quaest. Evangel.* ii. 39.

[2] Internal evidence, p. 75.

[3] 'His mother's sister' in John xix. 25 is often identified with 'Salome' and 'the mother of the sons of Zebedee' in the parallel passages, Mark xv. 40, Matt. xxvii. 56; so Westcott on John xix. 25.

Tradition states that the Apostle survived till the reign of Trajan, A.D. 98–117, if so he was probably younger than our Lord, and perhaps the youngest of the apostles. Possibly his youth may have been one cause of the special affection of Christ for him, which gained him the title 'the disciple whom Jesus loved[1].'

In the Synoptic Gospels John is usually spoken of in connexion with the Twelve, the inner circle, or his brother James. He and his brother received from our Lord the title 'Boanerges,' 'Sons of thunder[2]'; they suggested to him that he should call down fire from heaven upon an inhospitable Samaritan village[3]; they, too, asked that they might sit on his right and left in his kingdom[4]. Probably the moving spirit on such occasions was the elder brother James, and we need not credit John with all the fierceness and ambition which they imply. There is also an utterance of the Apostle which is commonly cited as an illustration of his 'burning temper.' We read that, on a certain occasion, 'John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbad him, because he followeth not us[5].' But the 'we' here is probably the Twelve, and the prime mover would be the impulsive Peter, seconded perhaps by James, the son of Zebedee; John may have merely acquiesced in the action of the rest. His words to our Lord were probably prompted by doubts as to whether they had done right. In the fourth Gospel John is specially prominent in connexion with the last week, the Passion, and Resurrection. Both here and in Acts[1] John appears in close association with Peter; their joint visit to Samaria is John's last appearance in Acts. The only mention of him in Paul's Epistles is the statement[2], 'James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision.' Thus, at Jerusalem, John naturally belonged to the Apostles of the Circumcision. The martyrdom of his brother, James[3], was probably a crisis in his life. On the one hand, such an experience would strengthen and refine his character; on the other, it gave him a position of greater independence and importance. There is, however, nothing in the Acts to suggest any assertion of such independence on the part of John; initiative and decision always seem to rest with Peter, or James the brother of the Lord.

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[1] John xiii. 23, &c. This disciple is almost universally identified with John; the N. T., however, nowhere states that he was John.

[2] Mark iii. 17. The translation 'Sons of thunder' is regarded by some as an inaccurate rendering added by an editor.

[3] Luke ix. 54.

[4] Mark x. 35; in Matt. xx. 20, their mother makes the request.

[5] Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 49, A. V.

The New Testament tells us nothing as to the Apostle's later history, except that in Revelation we find him[4] at Patmos, and he writes to the churches of Asia Minor with an authority which implies personal relations between him and them. There is a very large number of traditions concerning his later life. The most important statements are that he spent the closing years of his life at Ephesus; that he survived to extreme old age; that he was involved in controversy with heretics—the Gnostic Cerinthus or the Judaizing Ebion; that he had miraculous escapes from martyrdom; and that his last years afforded many beautiful examples of love, forbearance, and forgiveness.

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[1] Acts iii, viii. 14.
[2] Gal. ii. 9.
[3] Acts xii. 2.
[4] Revelation, however, is simply written in the name of 'John,' who is nowhere expressly identified with the Apostle.

We do not know how, or why, or when John left Jerusalem and came to Ephesus; or what interval, if any, intervened between his departure from the one and his arrival at the other.

If we ascribe Revelation to John, we may suppose that it largely represents the thoughts and feelings derived from his Jewish training, and from the influence of his brother and the Apostles of the Circumcision. The martyrdom of his brother and his departure from Palestine set him free from such influences; henceforth his mind was solely dominated by his recollections of the life and character and teaching of his beloved Master; and thus the Gospel and Epistles are the fruit of his inspired meditations and mature reflections.

ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

THE general line of thought of 1 John cannot be shewn by a brief analysis; the successive paragraphs are largely kaleidoscopic combinations of a few leading thoughts. The following is only a rough outline[1] of the structure of the Epistle.

i. 1-4. Introduction.
The Apostle's testimony to the Incarnation and its results.

i. 5—ii. 17. The contrast between light, truth, righteousness, love, and God, and those who walk in the light (the church) on the one hand; and darkness, falsehood, sin, hatred, and the Evil One, and those who walk in darkness (the world), on the other. The former overcome and abide; the latter are conquered and pass away.

ii. 18-28. Warning against the 'antichrists,' false teachers who have separated from the church, and deny the reality of the Incarnation.

ii. 29—iii. 18. The children of God are known by righteousness and by their mutual love. Sin is a mark of the children of the Devil, who hate the true believers.

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[1] Cf. Holtzmann.

iii. 19—v. 12. Righteousness and mutual love are combined with faith alike in the Deity and Incarnation of Jesus; and with loyalty to the Apostolic Church. By these various tokens Christians are assured that they are the sons of God, and are able to distinguish the true teachers from the false.

v. 13-21. Practical conclusion: the assurance of eternal life, and the efficacy of intercessory prayer for all except the worst class of sinners. Summary of the teaching of the Epistle.

This Epistle applies the teaching of the fourth Gospel[1] to the special needs of its readers. The latter were exposed to the errors taught by the forerunners of the Docetic Gnostics, who denied that Christ was really man. Hence the Epistle emphasizes the reality of the Incarnation, and does not follow the Gospel in dealing at length with the relation of the Son to the Father. Similarly, the Epistle is occupied with the nature of God as light and love, and does not dwell, as the Gospel does, on the transcendental attributes of Christ, while, however, it follows the Gospel in emphasizing his Divine sonship.

Like the other general Epistles, it combats an Antinomian tendency by insisting that morality is essential to the Christian life. In face of teachers who misrepresented Christianity, the faithful are urged to unity and mutual love; and one line of Christian thought reaches its climax in the reiterated statement that 'God is love,' iv. 8, 16. Other notable features are the designation of Christ as the Paraclete or Comforter, ii. 1, of the false teachers as antichrists, ii. 18, and of the gift of the Spirit as an unction or anointing, ii. 20, 27; also the appeal for confirmation of Christian truth to the inner witness of the Spirit, v. 10, rather than to the Resurrection or any external evidences; the statement that the condition on which prayer is answered is that it should be according to the will of God, v. 14.

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[1] Cf. pp. 71 ff.

The passage on the 'sin unto death,' and 'not unto death,' v. 16, 17, has been the subject of much controversy. The famous verses on the three witnesses, v. 7. 8, cease to be an express statement of the doctrine of the Trinity when they are read in the correct text; and in v. 20 the words 'This is the true God' must be applied to the Father and not to Christ.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF
JOHN

Date and Authorship.

Written in the name of 'The Presbyter.' This Epistle also is anonymous; it opens, 'The presbyter to the elect (lady or church).' The identity of this 'presbyter' has been matter of controversy from the first Christian centuries until the present day. He is sometimes identified with John the apostle—thus the title of the Epistle in the oldest Greek manuscripts is *'Ιωάννου β'*, i. e. 2 John—sometimes with a certain 'John the Presbyter,' who is said to have lived at Ephesus about the same time as the Apostle.

Relation to the rest of the New Testament. As we have already said[1], the tone, ideas, style, and vocabulary of this Epistle present a marked resemblance to the fourth Gospel, and 1 and 3 John, and a striking contrast to Revelation. It contains the Johannine key-words[2], 'love, truth, world,' and is specially connected with 1 John by a reference to 'antichrist' and other features, and with 2 John by the occurrence in both of a concluding statement that he will communicate by word of mouth certain matters which he does not care to commit to paper[3]. As in each of the Pastoral Epistles the opening salutation includes the phrase, 'Grace, mercy, peace.' There are also points of contact with 1 Peter; in that

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[1] p. 71.

[2] Cf. table, p. 72.

[3] 1 John ii. 18, 22, iv. 3; 2 John 7, 12; 3 John 13, 14.

Epistle the author styles himself a 'co-presbyter,' and sends greeting from an 'elect (lady or church)[1].'

Early testimony. The general condition of the church seems to have been similar to that implied in the *Teaching of the Twelve*, e.g. the churches are urged not to receive itinerant teachers unless they are assured of the soundness of their doctrine. Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria quote the Epistle as John's. It was perhaps included in the Old Latin Version[2]. The Muratorian Canon speaks of more than one Epistle of John. Hence our Epistle was current as John's before the end of the second century. It was not, however, universally accepted. Origen was doubtful about it; Eusebius placed it amongst the *Antilegomena* or disputed books; while, according to Jerome, it was often ascribed to John the Presbyter.

Conclusion. The external evidence is not inconsistent with authorship by John. The doubts of early writers are probably due to the lack of express testimony to the Johannine authorship; and this lack of testimony was due to the shortness of the Epistle, and—if 'the elect' was a 'lady'—to its having been addressed to an individual. We may therefore follow the internal evidence, and attribute 2 John to the same author and period as the fourth Gospel and the other Epistles[3].

Current views. The two shorter Epistles are usually ascribed to the same author as 1 John; a few scholars, however, reject this identity of authorship, more especially some who have accepted the Johannine authorship of the other books, but have ascribed 2 and 3 John to 'John the Presbyter,' on account of the opening sentence in each Epistle.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMPOSITION.

Place of writing. The contents of the Epistle do not directly help us to ascertain where it was written, but its close connexion with the Gospel and 1 John suggest that it may have been written from Ephesus[1].

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[1] 1 Pet. v. 1, 13.

[2] The absence of any reference to 2 John in Tertullian may be due to its brevity.

[3] See p. 76.

To whom addressed. If in the opening clause we render 'to the elect lady,' and take the words literally, the letter was written to some Christian woman, distinguished for piety and zeal. There would be nothing to shew where she lived. In favour of this view we have the following facts: the phrase 'elect lady' would naturally be addressed to an individual, and the second person is sometimes used; and a 'house' is spoken of, verse 10, and no church; 'lady,' *kyria*, is shewn from letters preserved in early papyri[2] to be a common term of endearment; the Third Epistle is certainly addressed to an individual. If this view is accepted, the 'lady' must be some eminent Christian, like Phœbe, Rom. xvi. 1, or Priscilla, who had a church in her house, Rom. xvi. 5; and the 'children' are not merely her family, but the members of that church. These considerations are not conclusive, as personification is quite possible, and, if once adopted, personal terms, like *kyria*, would naturally be used. The general character of the exhortations, &c., better suit a church than a family; and critics are divided on this question. It is, therefore, a possible alternative to take the phrase figuratively, and to understand 'elect lady' of some church, perhaps in Asia Minor. Clement of Alexandria, in an obscure fragment[3], speaks of the Epistle as written to 'virgins'; and states that it is nominally written to a Babylonian woman called Electa, but that the 'election' of the holy church is intended[4].

Occasion. The church addressed, or to which the 'elect lady' belonged, seems to have been in danger of falling under the influence of false teachers, by whom it was likely to be visited; the letter is a caution against receiving them.

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[1] See p. 77. [2] T. R. Harris, *Expositor*, 1901.

[3] Extant only in a Latin translation, and possibly due in part or wholly to the translator.

[4] Cf. commentary on verse 1.

JOHN THE PRESBYTER.

Something has already been said about John the Apostle, in connexion with 1 John; it may be well to say a few words here about the other John, to whom some or all of the Johannine writings are sometimes ascribed, since the word 'presbyter' in the opening verses of 2 and 3 John is often supposed to shew that he was the author of, at any rate, these two letters. All that we know of this 'John the Presbyter' is derived from a passage in Eusebius[1]. He gives the following quotation from Papias: 'If I met with any one who had been a follower of the Presbyters anywhere, I made a point of inquiring what were the statements of the Presbyters; what was said by Andrew, Peter, or Philip; what by Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or any other of the disciples of our Lord; what was said by Aristion, and the Presbyter John, disciples of the Lord.' Eusebius goes on to discuss this passage. He considers that Papias intended to distinguish John the Presbyter from the Apostle, and continues: 'Hence we have here a proof of the statement made by those who assert that there were two of the same name [John] in Asia, that there were also two tombs in Ephesus, and that both are called John's even to this day .... He [Papias] says also that he was a hearer of Aristion and of John the Presbyter. For as he has often mentioned them by name, he also gives their statements in his own works.'

John the Presbyter, therefore, was a disciple of Jesus, and, apparently, was living in Ephesus at the same time as John the Apostle. As, however, Papias was a hearer of the Presbyter, but not, it seems, of the Apostle, the former probably survived John. The circumstances suggest that the presbyter was very young when he was a disciple of Jesus, and that he lived to an advanced age.

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[1] *Ch. Hist.* iii. 39.

Some authorities identify the 'John the Presbyter' of Papias and Eusebius with the Apostle, contrary to the decided opinion of Eusebius himself, and to the natural interpretation of the words of Papias.

ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

1–3. Salutation.

4–11. Warning against false teachers.

12, 13. Promise of a visit. Message of goodwill.

The second and third Epistles (especially 2. 10 and 3. 9–12) shew that a sharp struggle for the control of the churches had broken out between the Christians who were faithful to apostolic teaching and those who opposed them.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF

JOHN

Date and Authorship.

Written in the name of 'The Presbyter.' This Epistle also is anonymous; it opens, 'The presbyter[1] to the beloved Gaius.' The title of the Epistle in the oldest Greek manuscripts is Ἰωάννου γ′, i.e. 3 John, where 'John' probably stands for the Apostle.

Relation to the rest of the New Testament. We have already mentioned[2] that this Epistle closely resembles the fourth Gospel and the other two Epistles, especially 3 John, and is in striking contrast to the Revelation. As regards language, there are several slight points of contact between 3 John and the Pastoral Epistles, Hebrews, and 1 Peter. The most noteworthy is the occurrence of the contrast between 'well-doing' and 'evil-doing[3],' both in 1 Pet. iii. 17 and 3 John 11.

Early testimony. In early literature there are even fewer traces of this Epistle than of 2 John. It was not included in the Peshitto, and there is no trace of it in the extant writings of Clement of Alexandria[4], Irenæus, Tertullian, or Cyprian. It is commonly said to have been included in the Old Latin, but, as far as available evidence is concerned, it may not have been added to that version before the fourth century[1]. The Muratorian Canon has a most obscure statement with regard to the Johannine Epistles[2]: it speaks of *two*, and couples them with Jude and the Wisdom of Solomon. Possibly the 'two' are the short Epistles, which, like Jude, were not universally received, and a reference to 1 John has been lost or accidentally omitted. If the 'two' are all the Johannine Epistles with which the author of the Canon was acquainted, they will be 1 and 2 John which were known in the West by the end of the second century, whereas 3 John cannot be traced there till later. There is no certain trace of 3 John till the third century. As in the case of 2 John, Origen is doubtful; Eusebius places the Epistle amongst the *Antilegomena*; and Jerome ascribes it to John the Presbyter.

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[1] See p. 87.

[2] pp. 71 ff.

[3] ἀγαθοποιεῖν and κακοποιεῖν.

[4] But cf. p. 63, note 7.

Conclusion and current views. As in the case of 2 John, we may follow the majority of critics in ascribing 3 John to the author and period of the fourth Gospel and 1 John. The still greater meagreness of early testimony is sufficiently explained by the fact that this very brief letter hardly touches upon any subject of general interest.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMPOSITION.

As for 2 John. The close connexion with 2 John suggests that this Epistle was written from the same place, perhaps Ephesus. It is addressed to 'the beloved Gaius,' a name too common to warrant our identifying its owner with any one of the numerous Gaiuses mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament[1]. The occasion of the letter was as follows: Certain Christians, perhaps itinerant teachers, known to John, had come to the church to which Gaius belonged, and he had given them a hospitable welcome; but the church generally, under the influence of a certain Diotrephes, had refused to receive them, and had also declined to listen to a letter from John, of which these Christians may have been the bearers. It has been suggested, and seems probable, that this former letter was 2 John. The Apostle wrote first to the church; and then, finding that his letter and his emissaries were set at nought by the church generally, he wrote to his friend Gaius to commend him for his hospitality, and to encourage him to persevere in his loyalty to the cause of truth.

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[1] A fragment of 3 John is found in the MS. *d.* of the Old Latin, i.e. the Latin column of the Graeco-Latin Codex, D, sixth century, but it may have been made for that MS.

[2] Westcott, *Canon*, emends the text slightly and obtains the following: 'Epistulae sane Iudae et superscripti Iohannis duas in Catholica habentur; et Sapientia ab amicis Salomonis in honorem ipsius scripta.' In a footnote he suggests *duae* for *duas*, and *catholicis* (i. e. the Catholic Epistles) for *catholica* (the Catholic Church).

ANALYSIS[2]

1–4. Salutation to, and commendation of, Gaius.

5–8. In praise of hospitality.

9–11. Denunciation of Diotrephes.

12. Commendation of Demetrius.

13, 14. Promise of a visit. Greetings.

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[1] Cf. Commentary on verse 1.

[2] For significance see on 2 John.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JUDE

DATE AND AUTHORSHIP.

'Jude' is the brother of the Lord. The Epistle opens, 'Judas, slave of Jesus Christ, brother of James.' In Luke's lists of the Twelve there is a 'Judas of James[1],' but this should probably be understood '*son* of James[2]'; and the 'Judas' of the Epistle does not style himself 'apostle,' and speaks of 'the apostles' as a body to which he did not belong[3]. For these reasons, and for others given in the Introduction to James[4], this 'Judas' is commonly identified with Judas, the brother of the Lord[5], and therefore brother of James who wrote the Epistle, and not to be identified with the apostle 'Judas of James[6].'

Relation to the rest of the New Testament. It has already been pointed out that Jude is the basis of a large section of 2 Peter[7]. There are parallels to the Pauline Epistles. The description of the false teachers as 'natural[8], not having the Spirit,' reminds us of the familiar Pauline contrast between the 'natural' and the 'spiritual' man[9]—implies acquaintance with Paul's teaching, if not with his writings. The doxology[1] begins and ends like the closing doxology in Romans[2], and both passages contain the terms 'only God' and 'glory.' But these features may be part of the conventional formulæ of a doxology, like the 'yours truly' at the close of a modern letter. Moreover, it is not certain that the doxology in Romans was part of the original text. The passage[3], 'Remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord . . . how that they said to you, In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts,' implies that the author and his readers were acquainted with an oral tradition or written record of such teaching of the apostles. Some have seen in these words a reference to Paul's speech at Miletus to the elders of Ephesus, or to the announcement of the coming of false teachers in the Pastoral Epistles[4].

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[1] Luke vi. 16; Acts i. 13.

[2] So R. V., which, however, places 'brother' in the margin as an alternative.

[3] Verse 18.

[4] See p. 12.

[5] Mark vi. 3.

[6] See p. 4.

[7] See p. 58.

[8] *ψυχικοί*; verse 19.

[9] 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15, &c.

Relation to other early literature. A remarkable feature of this brief letter is the large use made of pseudepigraphal literature[5]. The *Book of Enoch*, a compilation of material composed at various dates somewhere between B.C. 160 and A.D. 70, is expressly quoted[6]; and use is made of the *Assumption of Moses*[7].

The only important parallels with the Apostolic Fathers are with the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. Here, however, they are so striking that it has been suggested that portions of this work were composed by the author of Jude[8]. Compare, for instance, Jude 22 f.: 'And some reprove[9] in that they dispute with you; and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.'

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[1] Verses 24, 25.

[2] Ch. xvi. 25–27.

[3] Verse 18.

[4] Acts xx. 29, 30; 1 Tim. iv. 1–5, vi. 3–6; 2 Tim. iii. 1–9.

[5] Works written in the name of an ancient worthy by some later writer. The term is used technically for a class of Jewish and Christian religious works, similar in some respects to the O. and N. T. Apocrypha, but of less authority.

[6] Verses 14 f.; cf. also Commentary *passim*.

[7] Verse 9.

[8] So Chase, art. JUDE, Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*.

[9] For this reading see note in Commentary.

Teaching, ii. 7: 'Thou shalt not hate any one; but some thou shalt reprove; for some thou shalt pray; and some thou shalt love.'

Early and other testimony. There is abundant evidence that Jude was current as Jude's some time before the end of the second century. It is expressly mentioned as Jude's by Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and the Muratorian Canon, and was apparently included in the Old Latin Version. The absence of any reference to the Epistle in Irenæus and other early writers is doubtless due to its brevity. But it was not always accepted by those to whom it was known. Origen is doubtful; the Epistle is not included in the Peshitto, and was not fully received in some parts of the East for centuries. Eusebius places it amongst the 'disputed books,' and Jerome mentions that in his time it was rejected by many; but he himself maintains that it ought to be accepted as Scripture.

Internal evidence. The contents of the Epistle shew that some time had elapsed since the first foundation of the church. 'The apostles' are spoken of collectively, and their teaching is a matter of memory, a thing of the past[1]. The Pauline theology is fully developed[2]. It is 'the last time[1],' and the false teachers announced for that period have appeared. All this might have happened some time before the close of the first century. The contents neither establish nor disprove authorship by Jude.

Conclusion. The early testimony, especially the use of the Epistle by 2 Peter, shews that it was composed some time before A.D. 150. In this case the doubts of the early church do not seem fatal to the authorship of the Epistle by Jude the brother of the Lord. The brevity of the Epistle accounts for a comparative scantiness of attestation—and yet although shorter than 2 Peter it is more strongly attested—and this lack again may have contributed to the hesitation of the church to accept the Epistle. Probably, however, the main stumbling-block was not any doubt as to the authorship, but, as Jerome says, the fact that the Epistle gives a canonical status to the *Book of Enoch*, and, we may add, by implication, to the *Assumption of Moses*. In this case the hesitation to receive the book as canonical did not arise from doubts as to its authorship, but reluctance to accept it as canonical suggested that it could not have been written by a brother of the Lord.

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[1] Verses 17 f.

[2] See p. 92.

Again, the internal evidence requires us to date the Epistle not earlier than about A.D. 70–75, but there is no reason why a younger brother of our Lord should not have been living at that time. Hence we may accept the authorship by Jude at about A.D. 75.

Current views. In addition to Judas the apostle and Judas the brother of the Lord, the 'Judas' of this Epistle has been identified with Judas Barsabbas[1], and with a certain Judas who was bishop of Jerusalem in the reign of Hadrian. It has also been supposed that this 'Judas' is some person otherwise unknown.

Critics are divided as to authorship; perhaps the balance of authority is in favour of accepting the Epistle as the work of a Jude, either the apostle[2], or the brother of the Lord[3], or some other Jude[4]. Many of these date the Epistle shortly before A.D. 70, because there is no reference of any sort to the Fall of Jerusalem[5]; but the majority about A.D. 75–80[6]. Very many scholars, however, regard it as a work of the second century, either written in the name of, or mistakenly attributed to, Jude the apostle, or Jude the brother of the Lord[1], having possibly been actually written by some unknown 'Judas,' to whose name the description 'brother of James' was added through an erroneous conjecture.

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[1] Acts xv. 22.

[2] Winer.

[3] Weiss, Salmon, and the majority of those who date it before A.D. 80.

[4] So only a few, e.g. Spitta.

[5] Bleek, Weiss, &c.

[6] Ewald, Spitta, von Soden, Zahn, &c.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMPOSITION.

Place of writing. The contents leave the place of writing entirely uncertain. The constant connexion of James with Jerusalem suggest that his brother Jude may have written from that city, if before A.D. 70, or at any rate from Palestine. On the other hand, the false teachers attacked in the Epistle have been identified with certain Alexandrian Gnostics, and it has been supposed that it was written from Alexandria or some other place in Egypt.

To whom addressed. The letter is addressed 'to them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ.' In spite of this very general description, it was no doubt intended to be placed in immediate circulation in some particular church or churches. The similarity of the false teachers to those of 2 Peter and Revelation has suggested that this Epistle was also addressed to the churches of Asia Minor; but there are very many possible alternatives, e. g. Corinth, the Syrian Antioch, &c. It has also been maintained that it was specially addressed to Jews, but the contents do not warrant this conclusion.

Occasion. It appears that some churches within the sphere of Jude's influence were troubled by an outbreak of Antinomian practice, if not teaching—the one was almost certain to be accompanied by the other[2]. Jude wrote to denounce the offenders and thus strengthen the hands of those who were loyal to Christian truth and morality.

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[1] Harnack, A.D. 100-130; Jülicher, A.D. 100-180.

[2] Cf. Commentary.

LIFE OF ST. JUDE.

Nothing is known of Jude beyond the bare fact that he was brother of Jesus, and therefore of James; that he was probably married, and went from place to place preaching the gospel[1]; and that, according to tradition[2], Jude's grandchildren became objects of suspicion to Domitian[3], as members of the House of David, and possible rallying points of Jewish disaffection. They were brought before the emperor, and stated that they were peasants, farming thirty-nine acres of land, and that the kingdom of Christ for which they looked 'was not a temporal nor an earthly kingdom, but celestial and angelic.' Domitian dismissed them as unworthy of serious notice; thereafter they ruled the churches both as confessors and relatives of the Lord, and survived till the reign of Trajan[4].

What has been said of the life of James before the Resurrection and immediately after will also apply to Jude. Probably the latter was the younger of the two, and was evidently far less conspicuous and influential. It appears from the probable date of this Epistle that Jude survived James, and perhaps in some measure succeeded to his authority, and so came to write the Epistle. Tradition, however, did not credit him with succeeding to the formal authority over the church at Jerusalem with which it invested James. In the list of bishops of Jerusalem given by Eusebius[5], James is succeeded by Symeon.

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[1] 1 Cor. ix. 5, 'Have we no right to lead about a wife . . . even as . . . the brethren of the Lord.'

[2] Recorded in a fragment of the writings of Hegesippus, c. A.D. 160, a church historian, who travelled much, visited Rome, Corinth, &c. This fragment is preserved in Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* iii. 20.

[3] A. D. 81–98. [4] A.D. 98–117. [5] *Ch. Hist.* iv. 5. 3.

ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

THE Epistle of Jude is remarkable for its inculcation of courtesy in religious controvesy, verse 9; for its scathing denunciation of Antinomianism, or the attempt to find in Christian teaching an excuse for sinful self-indulgence; and for its use of the *Book of Enoch* as an authority of canonical standing.

1, 2. Salutation.

3, 4. Reasons for writing.

5–7. Ancient examples of the doom of the wicked.

8–11. Examples of the sin of railing.

12, 13. Figurative description of the ungodly.

14–19. The ungodly a fulfilment of the prophecies of Enoch and of the apostles.

20–23. Application.

24, 25. Doxology.

THE FOLLOWING WORKS MAY BE CONSULTED BY ENGLISH READERS OF THE GENERAL EPISTLES

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⁂ In addition to various references in the body of the book, the Editor wishes to acknowledge his special indebtedness to the works marked with an asterisk, and also to the *Hand-Commentar* on James, Peter, and Jude (von Soden), and on 1, 2, and 3 John (Holtzmann), to Meyer's *Commentar* on Peter and Jude (Dr. Ernest Kühl), and to Hühn's *Alttestamentlichen Citate.*

THE GENERAL EPISTLES

JAMES; I, II PETER; I—III JOHN

AND

JUDE

AUTHORIZED VERSION

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JAMES

Chap. 1

Salutation.

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus
Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered
abroad, greeting.

Duty of cheerful endurance.

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into
3 divers temptations; knowing *this*, that the trying
4 of your faith worketh patience. But let patience
have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and
entire, wanting nothing.

Wisdom to be sought in single-minded faith.

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,
that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not;
6 and it shall be given him. But let him ask in
faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is
like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and
7 tossed. For let not that man think that he shall
8 receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded
man *is* unstable in all his ways.

Motives for endurance.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he
10 is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low:
because as the flower of the grass he shall pass
11 away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a
burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the
flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion

Reward of endurance.

of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade
away in his ways. Blessed *is* the man that 12
endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall
receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath
promised to them that love him.

Source of temptation.

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am 13
tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with
evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man 14
is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust,
and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it 15
bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished,
bringeth forth death.

God the source of good only.

Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good 16, 1
gift and every perfect gift is from above, and
cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom
is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of 18
his own will begat he us with the word of truth,
that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his
creatures.

Be meek and docile.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man 19
be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for 20
the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of
God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity 21
of naughtiness, and receive with meekness
the engrafted word, which is able to save your
souls.

Hearing useless without doing.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers 22
only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a 23
hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto
a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he 24
beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway
forgetteth what manner of man he was. But 25
whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and

Chap. 1

continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Acceptable religious observances.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart,
27 this man's religion *is* vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Respect of persons.

2 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of
2 persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there
3 come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here
4 under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

Rich and poor, and the church.

5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to
6 them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before
7 the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that

How to observe the law of liberty.

8 worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:
9 but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet
11 offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not

Chap. 2

kill. Now if thou commmit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be 12
judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have 13
judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Faith and works.

What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man 14
say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith
save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and 15
destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto 16
them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?
Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being 17
alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and 18
I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my
works. Thou believest that there is one God; 19
thou doest well: the devils also believe, and
tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that 20
faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham 21
our father justified by works, when he had offered
Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith 22
wrought with his works, and by works was faith
made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled 23
which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was
called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by 24
works a man is justified, and not by faith only.
Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified 25
by works, when she had received the messengers,
and had sent *them* out another way? For as the 26

The faith of devils.

Abraham and Rahab.

body without the spirit is dead, so faith without
works is dead also.

The tongue.
3 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that
2 we shall receive the greater condemnation. For
in many things we offend all. If any man offend
not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able
Its power.
3 also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put
bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us;
4 and we turn about their whole body. Behold also
the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are*
driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about
with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor
5 listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member,
Its mischievousness.
and boasteth great things. Behold, how great
6 a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue *is*
a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among
our members, that it defileth the whole body, and
setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set
Not to be tamed.
7 on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of
birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is
8 tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the
tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full
Fickle.
9 of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even
the Father; and therewith curse we men, which
10 are made after the similitude of God. Out of the
same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing.
11 My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth
a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water*
12 and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear
olive berries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain
both yield salt water and fresh.

The true wisdom.
13 Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge
among you? let him shew out of a good con-

Chap. 3 versation his works with meekness of wisdom. But 14
if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts,
glory not, and lie not against the truth. This 15
wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly,
sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife *is*, 16
there *is* confusion and every evil work. But the 17
wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy
and good fruits, without partiality, and without
hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown 18
in peace of them that make peace. From whence 4
come wars and fightings among you? *come they*
not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your
members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and 2
desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and
war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, 3
and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye
may consume *it* upon your lusts.

Unruly greed.

The world and God.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that 4
the friendship of the world is enmity with God?
whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is
the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture 5
saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth
to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he 6
saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto
the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. 7
Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw 8
nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse
your hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye*
double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and 9
weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning,
and *your* joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in 10
the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

God the rightful Master.

Chap. 4

The duty of brotherliness.

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He
that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his
brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the
law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer
12 of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver,
who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou
that judgest another?

The uncertainty of life.

13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we
will go into such a city, and continue there a year,
14 and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know
not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is*
your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for
15 a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that
ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and
16 do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your
17 boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to
him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not,
to him it is sin.

The doom of oppressors.

5 Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your
2 miseries that shall come upon *you*. Your riches
are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.
3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of
them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat
your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure
4 together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the
labourers who have reaped down your fields, which
is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries
of them which have reaped are entered into the
5 ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in
pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have
nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.
6 Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he
doth not resist you.

Chap. 5

Encouragement in patient endurance.

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming 7
of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for
the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long
patience for it, until he receive the early and latter
rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for 8
the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge 9
not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned:
behold, the judge standeth before the
door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have 10
spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of
suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we 11
count them happy which endure. Ye have heard
of the patience of Job, and have seen the end
of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of
tender mercy.

Oaths.

But above all things, my brethren, swear not, 12
neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by
any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and
your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

Praise and prayer.

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is 13
any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick 14
among you? let him call for the elders of the
church; and let them pray over him, anointing him
with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer 15
of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall
raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they
shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to 16
another, and pray one for another, that ye may be
healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous
man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to 17
like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly
that it might not rain: and it rained not on the
earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

The blessedness of converting sinners.

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, 20 and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF

PETER

Chap. 1

Salutation.

PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers 1
scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia,
Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the fore- 2
knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification
of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the
blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace,
be multiplied.

Doxology.

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord 3
Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant
mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by
the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to 4
an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and
that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
who are kept by the power of God through faith 5
unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

The preciousness of salvation.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a 6
season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through
manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, 7
being much more precious than of gold that
perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be
found unto praise and honour and glory at the
appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, 8
ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet

believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full
9 of glory: receiving the end of your faith, *even* the
salvation of *your* souls.

Salvation a mystery to prophets and angels.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired
and searched diligently, who prophesied of the
11 grace *that should come* unto you: searching what,
or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which
was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand
the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that
12 should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not
unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the
things, which are now reported unto you by them
that have preached the gospel unto you with the
Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things
the angels desire to look into.

Be steadfast and consistent.

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be
sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to
be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus
14 Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves
according to the former lusts in your ignorance:
15 but as he which hath called you is holy, so
16 be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because
it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

The true life of the redeemed.

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect
of persons judgeth according to every man's work,
pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:
18 forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed
with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your
vain conversation *received* by tradition from your
19 fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as
20 of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who
verily was foreordained before the foundation of
the world, but was manifest in these last times for

Chap. 1

you, who by him do believe in God, that raised 21 him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Brotherly love in the new life.

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the 22 truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible 23 seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* 24 as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth 25 for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. Wherefore laying **2** aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, 2 desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the 3 Lord *is* gracious.

Christ the corner stone.

To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, dis- 4 allowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a 5 spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the 6 scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which 7 believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, 8 *even to them* which stumble at the word, being

The stone of stumbling.

Chap. 2

disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.
9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,
an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should
shew forth the praises of him who hath called you
10 out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in
time passed *were* not a people, but *are* now the
people of God: which had not obtained mercy,
but now have obtained mercy.

The royal priesthood.

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and
pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war
12 against the soul; having your conversation honest
among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak
against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good
works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the
day of visitation.

Believers and unbelievers.

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for
the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as
14 supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that
are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers,
15 and for the praise of them that do well. For so is
the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to
16 silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and
not using *your* liberty for a cloke of maliciousness,
17 but as the servants of God. Honour all *men*. Love
the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Duty to authorities.

18 Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear;
not only to the good and gentle, but also to the
19 froward. For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for
conscience toward God endure grief, suffering
20 wrongfully. For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be
buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?
but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it
21 patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. For even

Slaves and their masters.

Chap. 2

Christ the example of patient endurance.

hereunto were ye called: because Christ also
suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye
should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither 22
was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was 23
reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he
threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that
judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins 24
in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead
to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose
stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep 25
going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd
and Bishop of your souls.

Wives and husbands.

Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own 3
husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also
may without the word be won by the conversation
of the wives; while they behold your chaste con- 2
versation *coupled* with fear. Whose adorning let it 3
not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair,
and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;
but *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that 4
which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a
meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God
of great price. For after this manner in the old 5
time the holy women also, who trusted in God,
adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their
own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, 6
calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long
as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

Husbands and wives.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* 7
according to knowledge, giving honour unto the
wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs
together of the grace of life; that your prayers be
not hindered.

Chap. 3

Recapitulation.

8 Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion
one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be*
9 courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for
railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that
ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a
10 blessing. For he that will love life, and see good
days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his
11 lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil,
and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.
12 For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous,
and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the
13 face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil. And
who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of
that which is good?

Blessedness of suffering for Christ.

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy
are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be
15 troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts:
and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man
that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you
16 with meekness and fear: having a good conscience;
that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers,
they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good
17 conversation in Christ. For *it is* better, if the will
of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for
18 evil doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for
sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring
us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but
quickened by the Spirit:

How to meet opposition.

Christ our example.

19 By which also he went and preached unto the
20 spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient,
when once the longsuffering of God waited in the
days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein
21 few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The

Christ and the spirits in prison.

Baptism.

Chap. 3

like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is 22 gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Suffering purifies.

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us 4 in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin: that he no longer should live the 2 rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of *our* life 3 may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: wherein they think it strange that ye run 4 not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*: who shall give account to him that is 5 ready to judge the quick and the dead. For for 6 this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

Former sins to be abandoned.

The preaching to the dead.

Recapitulation.

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye 7 therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above 8 all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use 9 hospitality one to another without grudging. As 10 every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, *let him* 11 *speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

The duty of patient endurance.

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some
13 strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be
14 glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye;* for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is
15 glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody
16 in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him
17 glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of
18 them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the
19 ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

The blessedness of suffering for Christ.

Be steadfast.

Elders.

5 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall
2 be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready
3 mind; neither as being lords over *God's* heritage,

Chap. 5

but being ensamples to the flock. And when the 4
chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a
crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the 5
elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another,
and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth
the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Concluding exhortation.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty 6
hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:
casting all your care upon him; for he careth for 7
you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary 8
the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking
whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the 9
faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us 10
unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye
have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish,
strengthen, settle *you*. To him *be* glory and dominion 11
for ever and ever. Amen.

Closing salutations.

By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as 12
I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and
testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein
ye stand. The *church that is* at Babylon, elected 13
together with *you*, saluteth you; and *so doth* Marcus
my son. Greet ye one another with a kiss of 14
charity. Peace *be* with you all that are in Christ
Jesus. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF

PETER

Chap. 1

Salutation.

1 SIMON Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and
2 our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

Be steadfast and consistent.

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us
4 to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world
5 through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;
6 and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance
7 patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness
8 charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus
9 Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that
10 he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the

Chap. 1 rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered 11 unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Reminiscences.

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you 12 always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this 13 tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off *this* 14 my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye 15 may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

The Transfiguration.

For we have not followed cunningly devised 16 fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from 17 God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, 18 when we were with him in the holy mount. We 19 have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing 20 this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came 21 not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

Prophecy.

The false teachers.

But there were false prophets also among the **2**

Chap. 2

people, even as there shall be false teachers among
you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies,
even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring
2 upon themselves swift destruction. And many
shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of
whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.
3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned
words make merchandise of you: whose judgment
now of a long time lingereth not, and their damna-
4 tion slumbereth not. For if God spared not the
angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell,
and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be
5 reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old
world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher
of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the
6 world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of
Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned *them*
with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto
7 those that after should live ungodly; and delivered
just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the
8 wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among
them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous
soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;)
9 the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of
temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the
day of judgment to be punished:

Their doom.

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the
lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Pre-
sumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid
11 to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which
are greater in power and might, bring not railing
12 accusation against them before the Lord. But
these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken

Their character and conduct.

Chap. 2

and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of 13
unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, 14
and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken 15
the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for 16
his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. These 17

Their bad influence.

are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great 18
swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they 19
themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped 20

The doom of back-sliders.

the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For 21
it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them accord- 22

Chap. 3

ing to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Motive for writing.

3 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by
2 way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the
3 apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers,
4 walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from
5 the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing
6 out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water,
7 perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and
8 perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as
9 one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should
10 perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Answer to the 'mockers.'

Delay of second coming.

Chap. 3

Practical application.

Seeing then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Closing exhortation.

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF

JOHN

Purpose in writing.

1 That which was from the beginning, which we
have heard, which we have seen with our eyes,
which we have looked upon, and our hands have
2 handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was
manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness,
and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with
3 the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that
which we have seen and heard declare we unto you,
that ye also may have fellowship with us: and
truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his
4 Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto
you, that your joy may be full.

Light and darkness.

5 This then is the message which we have heard of
him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and
6 in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have
fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie,
7 and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light,
as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with
another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son
cleanseth us from all sin.

All are sinners.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive
9 ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess

Chap. 1

our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our*
sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
If we say that we have not sinned, we make him 10
a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, **2**

Christ our advocate.

these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.
And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the
Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the 2
propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only,
but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

A consistent life shews that we are 'in Christ.'

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we 3
keep his commandments. He that saith, I know 4
him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar,
and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth 5
his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected:
hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith 6
he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk,

The new-old commandment.

even as he walked. Brethren, I write no new com- 7
mandment unto you, but an old commandment
which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the
beginning. Again, a new commandment I write 8
unto you: which thing is true in him and in you:
because the darkness is past, and the true light
now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, 9
and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until
now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the 10
light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in
him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, 11
and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither
he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his
eyes.

To children, young men, fathers.

I write unto you, little children, because your sins 12
are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto 13

you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the
14 Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

The world and the Father.

15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of
16 the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of
17 the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

The antichrists.

18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the
19 last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they
20 were not all of us. But ye have an unction from
21 the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the
22 truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the
23 Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [*but*] *he that*
24 *acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.* Let

How the antichrist is known.

Chap. 2

The teaching of the Spirit.

that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this 25 is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life. These *things* have I written unto you 26 concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing 27 which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, 28 abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

The children of God.

If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that 29 every one that doeth righteousness is born of him. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath 3 bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the 2 sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth 3 himself, even as he is pure. Whosoever committeth 4 sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was 5 manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: 6 whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive 7 you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even

The Christian does not live in sin.

8 as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of
the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.
For this purpose the Son of God was manifested,
that he might destroy the works of the devil.
9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;
for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin,
10 because he is born of God. In this the children
of God are manifest, and the children of the
devil:

Mutual love the mark of the children of God.

Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of
11 God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For
this is the message that ye heard from the be-
12 ginning, that we should love one another. Not
as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his
brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because
his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Love and hatred.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.
14 We know that we have passed from death unto life,
because we love the brethren. He that loveth not
15 *his* brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth
his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no
16 murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby
perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down
his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives
17 for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's
goods, and seeth his brother have need, and
shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him,
18 how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little
children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue;

How we may know that we are in Him.

19 but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know
that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts
20 before him. For if our hearts condemn us, God
is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

Chap. 3

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have 21
we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we 22
ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing
in his sight. And this is his commandment, That 23
we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus
Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his command- 24
ments dwelleth in him, and he in him.

The false prophets.

And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by
the Spirit which he hath given us. Beloved, believe 4
not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are
of God: because many false prophets are gone out
into the world. Hereby know ye the spirit of God: 2
Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is
come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that 3
confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the
flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of
antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should
come; and even now already is it in the world.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome 4
them: because greater is he that is in you, than
he that is in the world. They are of the world: 5
therefore speak they of the world, and the world
heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth 6
God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth
not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and
the spirit of error.

Love the token of sonship.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of 7
God; and every one that loveth is born of God,
and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth 8
not God; for God is love. In this was manifested 9
the love of God toward us, because that God sent

Chap. 4

his only begotten Son into the world, that we might
10 live through him. Herein is love, not that we
loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son
11 *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God
so loved us, we ought also to love one another.
12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love
one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is
perfected in us.

Signs that we are in him.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he
14 in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And
we have seen and do testify that the Father sent
15 the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world. Whosoever
shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God
dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that
God hath to us. God is love; and he that
dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.
17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have
boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is,
18 so are we in this world. There is no fear in love;
but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear
hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect
19 in love. We love him, because he first loved us.
20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother,
he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother
whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom
21 he hath not seen? And this commandment have
we from him, That he who loveth God love his
brother also.

Love to God and man casts out fear.

5 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is
born of God: and every one that loveth him that
2 begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By
this we know that we love the children of God,

Love, obedience, and faith, signs of sonship.

Chap. 5

when we love God, and keep his commandments.
For this is the love of God, that we keep his 3
commandments: and his commandments are not
grievous. For whatsoever is born of God over- 4
cometh the world: and this is the victory that
overcometh the world, *even* our faith. Who is he 5
that overcometh the world, but he that believeth
that Jesus is the Son of God?

The three witnesses.

This is he that came by water and blood, *even* 6
Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and
blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness,
because the Spirit is truth. For there are three 7
that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.
And there are three that bear witness in earth, the 8
spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these
three agree in one. If we receive the witness of 9
men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the
witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.
He that believeth on the Son of God hath the 10
witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath
made him a liar; because he believeth not the
record that God gave of his Son. And this is the 11
record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and
this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath 12
life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not
life. These things have I written unto you that 13
believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye
may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may
believe on the name of the Son of God. And this 14
is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we
ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:
and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, 15

Inter-cessory prayer.

we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray
17 for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

Concluding summary.

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.
19 *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF

JOHN

Salutation.

THE elder unto the elect lady and her children, 1
whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also
all they that have known the truth; for the truth's 2
sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us
for ever. Grace be with you, mercy, *and* peace, 3
from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus
Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Warning against false teachers.

I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children 4
walking in truth, as we have received a command-
ment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, 5
lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment
unto thee, but that which we had from the begin-
ning, that we love one another. And this is love, 6
that we walk after his commandments. This is
the commandment, That, as ye have heard from
the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many 7
deceivers are entered into the world, who confess
not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This
is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, 8
that we lose not those things which we have
wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Who- 9
soever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine
of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the

doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the
10 Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not
this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house,
11 neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth
him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Conclusion.

12 Having many things to write unto you, I would
not *write* with paper and ink: but I trust to come
unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may
13 be full. The children of thy elect sister greet thee.
Amen.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF

JOHN

aluta-
ion.

THE elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom 1
I love in the truth.

ommen-
ation.

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest 2
prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.
For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren 3
came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even
as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater 4
joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

n praise
f hospi-
ality.

Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou 5
doest to the brethren, and to strangers; which have 6
borne witness of thy charity before the church:
whom if thou bring forward on their journey after
a godly sort, thou shalt do well: because that for 7
his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing
of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive 8
such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

enuncia-
on of
iotre-
hes.

I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who 9
loveth to have the preeminence among them,
receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will 10
remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against
us with malicious words: and not content therewith,
neither doth he himself receive the brethren,
and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them*

11 out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which
is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth
good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not
12 seen God. Demetrius hath good report of all *men*,
and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear record;
and ye know that our record is true.

Demetrius commended.

13 I had many things to write, but I will not with
14 ink and pen write unto thee: but I trust I shall
shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face.
Peace *be* to thee. *Our* friends salute thee. Greet
the friends by name.

Conclusion.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JUDE

Salutation.

JUDE, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called: 1
Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. 2

Reasons for writing.

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. 3
For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. 4

Ancient examples of the doom of the wicked.

I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. 5
And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. 6
Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like 7

manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Examples of the sin of railing.

8 Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.
9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation,
10 but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those
11 things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and
12 perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead,
13 plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for
14 ever. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord
15 cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have
16 spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men's
17 persons in admiration because of advantage. But,

Figurative description of the ungodly.

The arising of the 'ungodly,' a fulfilment of prophecy.

beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken
before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;
how that they told you there should be mockers 18
in the last time, who should walk after their own
ungodly lusts. These be they who separate them- 19
selves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Application. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on 20
your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,
keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the 21
mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
And of some have compassion, making a difference: 22
and others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the 23
fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Doxology. Now unto him that is able to keep you from 24
falling, and to present *you* faultless before the
presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the 25
only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty,
dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

THE GENERAL EPISTLES

JAMES; I, II PETER; I—III JOHN

AND

JUDE

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JAMES

JAMES, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, 1

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i. 1. *Salutation.*

1. James: the brother of the Lord; see Introduction, pp. 12 f., and Jude 1. The Greek is *Iakobos*; the Old Testament, 'Jacob.'

servant: *lit.* 'slave,' emphasizing the supreme and absolute authority of the master and the entire submission of the slave. At the same time slavery, in the N. T. period, was universally recognized as a legitimate institution; slaves were often men of skill or culture; so that the word 'slave' did not suggest as humiliating a degree of personal degradation as it does now.

servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. A unique phrase; the closest parallel is Titus i. 1, 'Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ.' The only other opening verses of N. T. Epistles in which the writers announce themselves simply as 'slaves' are Phil. i. 1 and Jude 1. In Rom. i. 1 and 2 Pet. i. 1, 'apostle' is added to 'slave.' See further on 1 Pet. i. 1.

Jesus Christ. In the Gospels our Lord is usually spoken of by his personal name, 'Jesus'; while 'Christ' is purely a title, the Anointed One, or Messiah, the promised deliverer of Israel and of the world. In the Epistles and in Revelation this name is comparatively rare, and its place is usually taken by 'Jesus Christ,' or by 'Christ,' which tends to become a purely personal name. Acts uses 'Jesus,' 'Christ,' or 'Jesus Christ.' In the Pauline Epistles, 'Christ Jesus' is also used occasionally[1]. Prof. Sanday, &c., on Rom. i. 1, draw the following distinction: 'In *Christ Jesus* the first word would seem to be rather more distinctly a proper name than in *Jesus Christ*,' in which '*Christ* to the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion, greeting.

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[1] In Acts xix. 4; Heb. iii. 1; 1 Pet. v. 10, 14; the A. V., following an inferior text, has substituted 'Christ Jesus' for 'Jesus' or 'Christ.'

2 Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into mani-
3 fold temptations; knowing that the proof of your faith

---

would seem to have a little of its sense as a title still clinging to it.'

the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion. Either literally, the Jewish Christians scattered abroad, as Prof. J. B. Mayor, &c. (cf. on 'Abraham our Father' in ii. 21); or a figurative term for Christians generally, like 'the Israel of God,' Gal. vi. 16. Cf. Introduction, p. 24; 1 Pet. i. 1; and Introduction to 1 Peter, p. 44.

the twelve tribes. The Jews, though mainly of the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin, included families from the other tribes, e. g. Anna (Luke ii. 36) was of the tribe of Asher. But the Jews claimed to be 'the twelve tribes' as being ecclesiastically the exclusive representatives of the ancient Israel. In Acts xxvi. 7 Paul, in his speech before Agrippa, speaks of 'our twelve tribes.'

greeting: a classical form of salutation, only found elsewhere in the N. T. in Acts xv. 23, the letter from the church at Jerusalem to the Christians of Antioch, &c., probably actually written by James, and in Acts xxiii. 26, the letter of Lysias to Felix.

i. 2–4. *Duty of cheerful endurance.*

Let trials be met cheerfully, so that they may confirm and perfect Christian character.

2. Count it all joy, &c. Cf. Rom. v. 2–6; 1 Pet. i. 6, 7, iv. 13, and more generally 1 Pet. i. 3–12, ii. 18–25, iii. 13–22, iv. 12, 13, where the idea of this verse is expanded and interpreted. Cf. Introduction to 1 Peter, p. 45.

manifold temptations: also in 1 Pet. i. 6, and 'manifold' in 1 Pet. iv. 10, which see. 'Manifold[1]' is strictly 'many-coloured,' 'variegated,' and refers not to the number, but to the variety of their trials.

temptations[2]: R. V. marg., 'trials'; a word almost wholly confined to the LXX and N. T., and commentaries upon them. It comes from a verb meaning 'to try' or 'test,' and is strictly a testing or test of character, which, when applied by ill-disposed persons, takes the form of an incitement to wrong-doing. It is the word used for 'temptation' in the Lord's Prayer and the narrative of the Temptation; but here and in 1 Pet. i. 6 it becomes, like our 'trial,' afflictions regarded as a test of character.

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[1] *ποικίλος.*

[2] *πειρασμοῖς.*

worketh patience. And let patience have *its* perfect work, 4
that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing.

But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, 5
who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it
shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing 6
doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the
sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that 7

3. proof: 'process of testing'; only elsewhere in the N.T., 1 Pet. i. 7.

patience. See on 2 Pet. i. 6.

4. have its perfect work: 'have full scope,' i.e. persist in endurance so long as there is any necessity for it, until it has accomplished all that it can accomplish.

perfect[1]: mature, full-grown. Cf. Eph. iv. 13, 'till we all attain unto . . . a fullgrown[1] man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

entire[2]: complete in all its parts; or, as James himself puts it, **lacking in nothing.** Only elsewhere in the N.T., 1 Thess. v. 23.

i. 5–8. *Wisdom to be sought in single-minded faith.*

In order that you may be capable of the persistent and cheerful endurance that makes trial a blessed discipline, seek wisdom from God with undivided desire and confidence, the essential condition of effectual faith—or, indeed, of any measure of consistency and success in life.

5. lacketh wisdom. Endurance of itself would not supply this, nor yet attain to its perfect work without wisdom (cf. Wisd. of Sol. ix. 6, 'For even if a man be perfect[1] among the sons of men, yet if the wisdom that cometh from thee be not with him, he shall be held in no account.'

liberally: *lit.* 'simply[3]'; so here perhaps 'unconditionally.'

upbraideth not. Cf. Ecclus. xli. 22, 'After thou hast given, upbraid not.'

7. that man: he that doubteth.

7, 8. let not that man think that he shall receive . . .; a doubleminded man, &c.: R.V. marg., slightly altering the punctuation of the Greek, 'That a doubleminded man, unstable in all his ways, shall receive anything,' &c. The A.V. places a full stop after 'Lord,' and makes verse 8 a separate sentence, 'A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.' These variations hardly affect the sense.

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[1] τέλειος. [2] ὁλόκληρος. [3] ἁπλῶς.

man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord;
8 a doubleminded man, unstable in all his ways.
9 But let the brother of low degree glory in his high
10 estate: and the rich, in that he is made low: because
11 as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the
sun ariseth with the scorching wind, and withereth the
grass: and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the

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8. doubleminded. Only elsewhere in the N. T. in iv. 8; the word[1] first occurs in literature in Christian writings. The *Shepherd of Hermas* (see Introduction, pp. 16 f.) has much to say about 'double-mindedness.' For the sense cf. our phrase, 'To be in two minds about anything.'

i. 9-11. *Motives for endurance.*

Let the poor Christian find a motive for cheerful endurance in the thought of his high estate as a child of God; and let the wealthy Christian rejoice to suffer loss for Christ's sake, because earthly riches and distinction speedily perish.

9. low degree: humble station in life.

high estate: as a Christian.

10. the rich Christian, who would be a special mark for persecutors, and would have much to lose by persecution. Some scholars on account of the disparagement of the 'rich' in ii. 6, 7, v. 1-6, suppose that the rich heathen are meant, and take the construction somewhat differently, e. g. 'the rich man glories in that which is really his humiliation,' v. 2, 3. But this view is improbable.

in that he is made low. Not, as some take it, in that he has learnt humility; but in the humiliation, the being brought, through persecution, to the 'low degree' of his poorer brethren.

10, 11. as the flower of the grass . . . perisheth. An expansion of Isa. xl. 6, 7; also quoted in 1 Pet. i. 24, which see.

10. flower of the grass: in the Hebrew, 'flower of the field.' The LXX, which James follows, perhaps intended this phrase to mean 'the flowers found among the grass'; or they may have given what they supposed to be a literal rendering of the Hebrew without troubling themselves to think what it meant.

11. the scorching wind: the *Sirocco*, springing up at sunrise; A. V., less probably, 'with its burning heat.'

the grace of the fashion of it: *lit.* 'the grace of its countenance,' its beauty of form and colour.

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[1] *δίψυχος.*

fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade
away in his goings.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when 12
he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of
life, which *the Lord* promised to them that love him.
Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of 13

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fade away: but according to 1 Pet. i. 4, v. 4, the Christian inheritance and crown of glory do not 'fade away.'

goings. Only elsewhere in the N. T., Luke xiii. 22, in the sense of 'journey'; it is sometimes taken in this literal sense here, of the journeyings of merchants. This seems awkward. In the O. T. a man's 'steps' or 'goings' are often a figure for the course and conduct of his life, e. g. Ps. xvii. 5, 'My steps have held fast to thy paths'; cf. also the phrase 'going out and coming in,' Isa. xxxvii. 28; so probably here.

i. 12. *Reward of endurance.*

Endurance will be rewarded with the promised crown of life.

12. Blessed: *lit.* 'happy,' the word used in the Beatitudes.

the man: whether of high or low degree. For the opening clause of this verse cf. Dan. xii. 12.

when he hath been approved: A. V., 'when he is tried.' The Greek, as often happens when the A. V. and R. V. differ, includes the meaning of both, 'when he has been tried, and the trial has proved him to be steadfast in his loyalty.'

the crown of life. The same phrase occurs in Rev. ii. 10. This 'crown' (cf. on 1 Pet. v. 4) is the victor's wreath which the Christian receives when, by God's grace, he has conquered temptation and won his way into life. We read also of 'crowns' of righteousness, 2 Tim. iv. 8, and glory, 1 Pet. v. 4.

which the Lord promised. 'The Lord,' as the italics of the R. V. shew, is not expressed in the Greek, but is clearly required by the context. Hence the insertion of the words in the text by the MSS. followed by the A. V. The 'promise' may have been some unrecorded utterance of our Lord as to the 'crown of life,' or the reference may be to the general promise of life to believers.

i. 13–15. *Source of temptation.*

Let no one be seduced from loyal constancy by the quibble that God is the source of temptation. Temptation arises from a man's own evil inclinations; to yield is sin, and the consequence of sin is death.

13. I am tempted of God: a natural conclusion from such O. T. passages as 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, and from a mistaken application

God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he
14 himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted,
when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed.
15 Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and

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of the doctrine of Divine sovereignty. Cf. the objection cited by Paul in Rom. ix. 19, 'Why doth he still find fault? For who withstandeth his will?' and the apostle's answer in the following verses.

God cannot be tempted with evil. 'Cannot be tempted' is a single word in the Greek[1]. This word only occurs here in the N. T.; it is unusual in Greek literature generally, and its meaning is matter of controversy. The most probable rendering is that common to the A. V. and to the R. V. text, on which we are commenting. Another translation is that of the R. V. margin, 'God is untried in evil,' i. e. 'has no experience of evil, does not know from His own experience what it is to feel or follow the promptings of an evil nature.' Either view give the same general sense. It is absurd to think of God as tempting men, in the sense of trying to induce them to do evil, because such tempting on His part would imply that He took pleasure in evil. So far from that, He is either (according to the view taken) unversed in evil, or cannot even feel in the suggestion of evil any temptation; how then can He take an active delight in trying to bring about evil?

he himself tempteth no man. Suffering and other external circumstances which incite to or suggest evil courses may be ordained of God, but His purpose is not to lead men into evil conduct, but to discipline them in constancy and faith.

14. each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. R. V. marg., to much the same effect, 'each man is tempted by his own lust, being drawn away by it, and enticed.' 'Lust' is any inclination—here the inclination to any kind of evil; but the same word is used elsewhere in a perfectly neutral sense. It is the inner inclination to evil, eager to avail itself of the external opportunity, which constitutes temptation.

15. lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin. There is no sin in the mere desire for gain or enjoyment, which may suggest an evil impulse, but there is sin when this desire leads to wrong action. The exposition of these verses has been based upon the view that 'lust,' or rather 'desire,' is used here in a bad sense as inclination to evil. If so, the treatment of the subject is not exhaustive. In many temptations, the suggestion or impulse

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[1] *ἀπείραστος.*

the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death. Be not 16
deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every 17
perfect boon is from above, coming down from the
Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither

arises from an innocent desire for advantages, lawful in themselves, but only to be obtained, in the special circumstances, by wrongdoing. The desire to provide for a family may prompt a man to avail himself of opportunities of making unfair profits. If the man yields, it is not through any positive inclination to evil, but through the lack of loyalty to righteousness. Such cases do not seem to be in the Apostle's mind.

beareth . . . bringeth forth: two different words in the original; hence the A. V. 'bringeth forth . . . bringeth forth' is misleading.

fullgrown: not as A. V., 'finished.' The sin, the child of uncontrolled desire, grows up, and in its turn has a child—death.

i. 16–18. *God the source of good only.*

But we need not confine ourselves to the mere negative statement that God is not the source of so evil a thing as prompting to sin; positively, He is the unchanging source of good, so that only that which is good can come from Him. We are His spiritual children in the gospel, not that we may be seduced from it by temptation, but that it may spread from us throughout the world.

16. Be not deceived by such ideas as that cited in 13^a; A. V., less accurately, 'do not err.'

17. Every good gift and every perfect boon. The Greek has the metre of a line of poetry, probably by accident.

gift . . . boon: two different words; A. V., 'gift . . . gift.'

the Father of lights: the creator of sun, moon, and stars, and so the ultimate source of physical light; suggesting also that God is the source of intellectual and spiritual illumination (cf. 1 John i. 5, 'God is light'). An ancient Jewish benediction runs, 'Blessed be the Lord our God who hath formed the lights.'

can be: A. V., less probably, 'is.'

variation: A. V., 'variableness.' The Greek word[1] (only here in the N. T.) is very similar to our 'parallax,' and has sometimes been supposed to be, like it, a technical astronomical term, but it is rather to be taken in a general sense. The sun and moon have 'variations' which leave us in darkness; the Divine light never wanes, or sets, or is eclipsed.

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[1] παραλλαγή.

18 shadow that is cast by turning. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

19 Ye know *this*, my beloved brethren. But let every man

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shadow that is cast by turning. The meaning of the original[1] is uncertain. In considering the phrase we must, of course, dismiss from our minds our modern knowledge of astronomy, e. g. of the revolution of the earth on its axis, and its motion through an orbit round the sun. 'Shadow cast by turning' could only mean to the readers the darkness in which the earth is plunged by the diurnal revolution[2] or 'turning' of the sun and moon round the earth—a special instance of 'variation.' The phrase, however, is not an apt expression of the idea.

The A. V., 'shadow of turning,' takes the word 'shadow' figuratively, like our 'ghost,' in 'not a ghost of a chance'; but 'shadow' would hardly be so used when contrasted with light. Other explanations are 'shadow caused by change' or 'changing shadow,' either of which would be a possible rendering of the Greek, and would make very good sense. Two Old Latin versions render 'particle' or 'moment of shadow,' which may represent a Greek phrase[3] differing very slightly from that found in the extant MSS. and translated by our versions. 'Shadow' is a very rare word, only used here in the N. T.

18. brought us forth: therefore, according to our usual phrase, 'Our Father'; but the term, which was suggested by verse 15, belongs to the mother. On the ground of this and other passages (Deut. xxxii. 18; Isa. lxvi. 13, &c.) a doctrine of the Divine motherhood has been based. This idea is said to have taken a strong hold of Chinese Christians. It is not likely that any of the inspired writers intended to formulate such a doctrine, even if it is implied by their language. This 'bringing forth' is a figure for conversion to Christianity.

the word of truth: the gospel.

firstfruits of his creatures: not the privileged recipients of a special favour, but the first sheaves of a world-wide harvest of redeemed souls. Cf. Exod. xxii. 29 ff.

creatures. This comprehensive term may extend even beyond humanity (cf. Rom. viii. 19–22).

i. 19–21. *Be meek and docile.*

In order that you may not fall through temptation, but may be examples and pioneers of faith, seek to be meek hearers

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[1] *τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα.* Sinaitic MS. *ἀποσκιάσματος.*

[2] Which we know to be only apparent.

[3] *ῥοπὴ ἀποσκιάσματος.*

be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the 20
wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.
Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of 21
wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word,

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of the gospel of salvation rather than to manifest a hasty temper in foul-mouthed abuse.

19. Ye know this: viz. what has been stated in the previous paragraph. Their knowledge is the ground of the appeal that follows. R. V. marg., 'Know ye'; A. V., following inferior MSS., 'Wherefore.'

swift to hear: i. e. to hear Christian teaching (cf. verses 21, 22). Cf. Ecclus. v. 13[1].

slow to speak, slow to wrath. These words strike the key-note of much of the Epistle. Chap. iii. shews that those addressed were afflicted by a *cacoëthes loquendi*, an eagerness to speak in the Christian gatherings, which often degenerated into angry abuse. Let them therefore be ready to learn rather than eager to teach; and let them not lose their tempers because others differ from them as to doctrine or practice.

20. the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Those admonished would have justified themselves by saying that they were angry on account of false teaching and unworthy habits. The Apostle anticipates this plea by reminding them that an evil temper neither commends sound doctrine nor promotes holy living.

21. putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness. 'Putting away,' i. e. stripping off clothing. 'Filthiness,' only here in the N. T.; the corresponding adjective, 'filthy,' is used in ii. 2 (R. V., 'vile clothing'). The noun sometimes has the figurative sense of 'meanness,' like our 'shabbiness.' For 'wickedness' we should probably adopt the R. V. marg., 'malice'; the Greek word[2] started with a perfectly general meaning of 'evil,' but often became specialized like our 'ill-nature,' a sense which suits the context here and in the parallel passage (1 Pet. ii. 1). 'Filthiness and overflowing of malice' may express a single compound idea—'disgusting and excessive malignity.' The reference may be general, but more probably refers specially to the intemperate spitefulness of the discussions and party squabbles of the churches. Even if 'filthiness' is taken literally, it can be abundantly illustrated from the history of religious controversy in the first six centuries of the church and at the Reformation.

implanted: or, as R. V. marg., 'inborn,' not as A. V., 'en-

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[1] Hühn, *A. T. Cit.* p. 119.

[2] κακία.

22 which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of
the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves.
23 For if any one is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he
is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror:
24 for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway
25 forgetteth what manner of man he was. But he that
looketh into the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and *so* con-

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grafted'; the word only occurs here in the N.T. The gospel is a new life planted or born in the soul.

i. 22–25. *Hearing useless without doing.*

But however desirable it may be to hear the truth, hearing is useless unless it leads us to apply the teaching we receive to practical life. Hearing without doing is as trivial and fruitless as a casual glance at oneself in a looking-glass; blessing only follows active obedience.

22. be ye: strictly, 'become'; they had not attained to any large degree of this grace. He who listens in a spirit of angry criticism, eager to vent itself in hot words, is not likely to apply the measure of the truth there may be in what he hears. Cf. Matt. vii. 21–27; Rom. ii. 13.

23. his natural face. R.V. marg. gives, as the literal rendering of the Greek, 'the face of his birth.' The phrase is unique and obscure; no one has clearly shewn what point James intended to make by speaking of the man's face as that 'of his birth.' The word for 'birth[1]' is translated by the R.V. 'generation' or 'genealogy' in Matt. i. 1; 'birth' or 'generation' in Matt. i. 18; 'birth' in Luke i. 14. In Jas. iii. 6, in another very obscure phrase, 'wheel of *genesis*,' it is translated 'nature' or 'birth.' These are the only places where the word occurs in the N.T. The meaning perhaps is 'the face a man is born with, with all its natural defects.' Prof. Mayor, however, explains *genesis* as 'fleeting earthly existence,' and makes the phrase mean 'the face which belongs to this transitory life' contrasted with 'the character which is being here moulded for eternity.'

24. beholdeth . . . goeth away . . . forgetteth: a trivial and transient episode, due to a casual impulse, leaving no permanent impression, and having no practical results.

25. he that looketh into the perfect law, . . . so continueth, . . . not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh. The law (see next note) is regarded as a mirror, with, as it were, magic properties. Looking into it, a man sees not only his actual

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[1] γένεσις.

tinueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that
worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing. If any 26
man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth
not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion
is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before our God and 27
Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their
affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

self with all its defects, but the ideal of Christian manhood. Studying the vision, and seeking to realize the ideal, he attains to blessing. Cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

looketh into: *lit.* 'bends over,' 'stoops down,' to look closely and carefully; used in John xx. 5 of John stooping to look into the empty sepulchre; also in 1 Pet. i. 12.

the perfect law, the law of liberty. The O. T. could speak of the Mosaic law as perfect in its time (Ps. xix. 7), but that had now become obsolete (Heb. viii. 13); and the only law which was perfect, which fully met the needs and opportunities of the new era, was the law of Christ, the 'new covenant' announced in Jer. xxxi. 31–34: cf. Heb. viii. 7–13. This new law, as Paul often insists (Rom. viii. 2, &c.), is the law of Christ, the spontaneous obedience of the believer to the suggestions of the Spirit, in contrast to the 'law of ordinances,' which constrained and coerced by innumerable rules. Cf. ii. 8, 12.

i. 26, 27. *Acceptable religious observances.*

Though the law is a law of liberty, there remain external standards by which a man may know whether he is really obedient. One test is his behaviour to his fellows—courteous, kindly, and truthful speech; care for the needy; abstinence from the evil doings of the ungodly.

26. thinketh himself to be: R. V. marg., 'seemeth to be,' so A. V.

religious . . . religion[1]. These words may be best defined in the words of Trench[2]: 'We have in "religious . . .," the zealous and diligent performer of the divine offices, of the outward service of God . . . "Religion" is predominantly the ceremonial service of religion, the external forms or body, of which "godliness[3]" is the informing soul.' 'Religion' here is not the inner life, but the external manifestation. There is still a contrast with the Jewish law. The 'Divine offices' of the Christian faith are not ceremonies of worship, but the acts of a Christlike life.

27. unspotted: also 1 Pet. i. 19; 2 Pet. iii. 14.

world. Here, as in 2 Pet. i. 4, ii. 20, and in John's writings,

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[1] *θρῆσκος, θρησκεία.* [2] *Synonyms,* 170. [3] *εὐσέβεια*; cf. 2 Pet. i. 3.

2 My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus
2 Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons. For
if there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring,
in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in
3 vile clothing; and ye have regard to him that weareth the
fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place;
and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit

the world (*kosmos*), apart from and opposed to Christ; the sphere in which life is purely selfish.

ii. 1–4. *Respect of persons.*

Shew equal honour to rich and poor; for instance, you shew a mean spirit if you put a poor man into an inferior seat in your meetings for public worship.

1. hold not the faith . . . with respect of persons, i. e. do not let your new life derived from Christ be interfered with by anxiety to conciliate the rich man at the expense of the poor. R. V. marg., 'do ye, in accepting persons, hold the faith?' i. e. 'If ye do this, are you really Christians?'

the Lord **of glory.** There is much controversy as to the exact connexion of the words 'of glory,' the details of which would require more space than can be spared for a comparatively unimportant point. An interesting alternative to the R. V. is the suggestion that we should translate 'Jesus Christ, who is the glory.' 'Glory[1]' is sometimes used for the term 'Shekinah' used by the Jews for the manifestation of God.

2. synagogue: usually, in the N. T., of the buildings in which the Jews met for worship. In Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9, societies of Jews are spoken of as 'synagogues of Satan'; in Heb. x. 25, a compound[2] of this word is translated 'the assembling . . . together.' In the LXX, 'synagogue[3]' is the regular translation of the two Hebrew words for 'assembly' or 'congregation,' one of which is also often rendered *ecclesia*. In classical Greek the word means 'bringing together,' 'assembling.' If the Epistle is very early, the 'synagogue' here may be the Jewish building, which Jewish Christians still frequented; at a later time the name of the Jewish building might perhaps be used for the place of Christian worship; but the word is best taken with R. V. marg. as 'assembly.'

a man with a gold ring . . . a poor man: both strangers. James fears lest the Christians shew an unseemly eagerness to attract rich outsiders.

vile. Cf. on i. 21. Rather, 'shabby,' 'worn and stained.'

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[1] *δόξα.* [2] *ἐπισυναγωγή.* [3] i. e. *συναγωγή.*

under my footstool; are ye not divided in your own 4
mind, and become judges with evil thoughts? Hearken, 5
my beloved brethren; did not God choose them that
are poor as to the world *to be* rich in faith, and heirs of
the kingdom which he promised to them that love him?
But ye have dishonoured the poor man. Do not the 6

3. sit under my footstool: rather, 'sit down by my footstool,' i. e. on the ground.

4. are ye not divided in your own mind? divided between the Christian duty of regarding all alike as brethren (Gal. iii. 28), and the interested desire to associate with wealthy people—'doubleminded,' i. 8. R. V. marg., 'Do ye not make distinctions among yourselves?' This, however, would imply that the two men were members of the church. A. V., 'Are ye not then partial in yourselves?' an improbable rendering of the Greek. Another translation is 'Do ye not doubt[1]?' i. e. 'Can you really believe, if you act thus?' Cf. on ii. 1.

are ye not . . . become judges with evil thoughts? Their action implied a judgement as to the relative worth of the two men. This was wrong, because the men were strangers, of whom too little was known to warrant any such judging. Moreover, they judged 'with evil thoughts' on the principle that the costliness of a man's dress shewed that he was a desirable associate. The A. V., 'judges of evil thoughts,' was probably intended to convey the same meaning.

ii. 5–7. *Rich and poor, and the church.*

This truckling to the rich at the expense of the poor is contrary to the example set by God, for He is specially gracious to the poor. Moreover, the men upon whom you are so ready to fawn persecute you and blaspheme Christ.

5. did not God choose them that are poor. James does not say that only the poor were chosen. In some books of the O. T., however, 'poor' and 'godly' are almost synonymous.

poor as to the world: i. e. in worldly wealth, and in the eyes of the world. A. V., following inferior MSS., 'the poor of this world,' which would have about the same meaning.

to be rich in faith: not (as A. V., 'the poor of this world, rich in faith') because they were rich in faith.

heirs of the kingdom. A unique phrase. An inheritance as a figure for the privileges of believers is an O. T. idea (Ezek. xliv. 28, &c.) frequently used by Paul (Rom. viii. 17, &c.);

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[1] The word used here is another form of the verb twice translated 'doubt' in i. 6.

rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the
7 judgement-seats? Do not they blaspheme the honourable
8 name by the which ye are called? Howbeit if ye fulfil
the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love
9 thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have
respect of persons, ye commit sin, being convicted by
10 the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the
whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is become

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cf. 1 Pet. i. 4. 'Kingdom of God' and 'kingdom of heaven' were Christ's favourite terms for the new spiritual dispensation which he inaugurated.

6. Do not the rich oppress you? Our ignorance of the circumstances of those to whom this letter was addressed leaves it uncertain why the rich were specially zealous in persecution. At Jerusalem the Sadducees were hostile to Christianity on account of its doctrine of immortality, and they comprised many powerful officials and wealthy nobles.

7. they blaspheme the honourable name: of Christ. The prosecution of Christians would involve blasphemous slanders as to Christ and his teaching: cf. on 1 Pet. ii. 12.

ii. 8-13. *How to observe the law of liberty.*

Those who treat the poor man with contumely break the command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' and thus become transgressors of the law, which is transgressed as a whole if one of its commands is disobeyed. Live according to that law of liberty by which you hope to be judged. Its judgement is most inexorable against the hard-hearted, but least severe to the compassionate.

8. the royal law: usually explained as the supreme law, the 'king of laws.' A similar phrase, however, in 2 Macc. iii. 13, means 'the commandments of the king,' which favours another view here, viz. 'the law of the king,' i.e. 'of Christ.' It seems possible that James, a Palestine Jew not greatly skilled in Greek idiom, may have meant 'the law of the kingdom.'

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: a quotation from Lev. xix. 18. Our Lord reckoned this as the second greatest commandment, inferior only to 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,' &c., Mark xii. 28-32. According to Paul the whole law is fulfilled in this one commandment, Gal. v. 14; Rom. xiii. 8-10.

9. convicted by the law: Lev. xix. 15, and implicitly by verse 8.

10. one point: e.g. the behaviour described in verses 2, 3.

guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, 11
said also, Do not kill. Now if thou dost not commit adultery, but killest, thou art become a transgressor of the law.
So speak ye, and so do, as men that are to be judged by 12
a law of liberty. For judgement *is* without mercy to 13
him that hath shewed no mercy: mercy glorieth against judgement.

What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath 14
faith, but have not works? can that faith save him? If 15
a brother or sister be naked, and in lack of daily food,
and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed 16
and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful
to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it have 17

guilty of all. Equivalent sayings are quoted from the Jewish Rabbis: cf. also Gal. v. 3. All sin is 'of a piece'; or, to use a technical term, there is a 'solidarity' of virtue and vice. One sinful act indicates a sinful disposition which will manifest itself in many other ways when there is convenient opportunity and adequate inducement.

12. a law of liberty: not, as A. V., 'the law of liberty.' Stress is laid on the character of the law. Cf. on i. 25.

13. mercy glorieth against judgement. 'Mercy' is not an exact equivalent of the original, which is a more comprehensive term, including 'lovingkindness and compassion.' God's compassion finds in man's kindliness to man an opportunity for setting aside triumphing over judgement. 'If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,' Matt. vi. 14.

ii. 14-17. *Faith and works.*

Faith that has no practical influence on conduct is as hollow a mockery as to bid the destitute be warmed and fed without giving them food and firing[1].

15. brother or sister: fellow Christians, whom a true believer would be specially bound to help (Gal. vi. 10).

naked: rather, 'poorly clad'; the real English equivalent in a similar passage would be 'in rags.'

daily. Not the word used in the Lord's Prayer.

17. faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself. Cf. the phrase 'dead works,' Heb. vi. 1, ix. 14.

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[1] On the relation of verses 14-26 to Paul's doctrine of faith, see general note following note on verse 26.

18 not works, is dead in itself. Yea, a man will say, Thou
hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith apart
from *thy* works, and I by my works will shew thee *my*
19 faith. Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well:
20 the devils also believe, and shudder. But wilt thou

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ii. 18, 19. *The faith of devils.*

Faith—even in the Divine unity—without works, is as barren as the faith of devils.

18. Yea, a man will say. The Apostle emphasizes his view by expressing it as the obvious criticism of 'the man in the street,' of the claim to possess faith made by any one who did not produce the fruits of faith. R. V. marg., 'But some one will say,' would suggest that the verse is an objection to James's view, and attempts have been made to interpret it on these lines, but with little success.

shew me thy faith apart from thy **works,** &c. A man's faith can only prove its existence and genuineness by producing right conduct. Obviously, in applying this principle, a man's conduct must be considered as a whole, and in relation to his circumstances; and regard must be had to the length of his Christian life, and to his character and habits at his conversion.

19. that God is one: A. V., with some ancient authorities, 'that there is one God.' The Jews insisted on this article of faith above all others. The *Shema*, the passage of Scripture which every pious Jew recited morning and evening, began 'Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God, Jehovah is one.' This monotheistic faith was one special ground for the Jews' claim to religious superiority over other peoples.

the devils: R. V. marg., '*Gr.* [*lit.*] demons[1].' Malevolent supernatural beings who played a very large part in ancient Eastern religions. They chiefly appear in the N. T. as 'possessing' unfortunate victims, but are also identified with heathen deities (1 Cor. x. 20–22).

believe. As supernatural beings, the devils are thought of as knowing that there is one supreme God, and therefore necessarily believing it. Similarly, they are described in the Gospels as having supernatural knowledge of the Divinity of Jesus (Mark v. 7).

shudder: A. V., 'tremble'; a testimony alike to the reality and the futility of their faith. The devils were a perfect illustration of the statement that faith without works was useless; they had a real and enlightened faith, if faith be mere intellectual conviction, together with an entire absence of 'works'; and the results were worthless for themselves and for everybody else.

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[1] *δαιμόνια.*

know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?
Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that 21
he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Thou seest 22

ii. 20–26. *Abraham and Rahab.*

The Scripture examples of Abraham and Rahab cited to shew that faith does not set men right with God until it is expressed in a holy life. Faith without works is as dead as a body without a soul.

20. vain man: *lit.* 'empty,' i.e. when professing to be full. Cf. 'empty-headed,' 'wind-bag,' &c.

barren: futile; by etymology, 'without works,' i.e. results. A. V., with many ancient authorities, 'dead.'

21. Abraham our father: probably implying that those addressed are Jews (cf. Rom. iv. 1, 12); but he was also, according to Paul, the (spiritual) father of believing Gentiles (Rom. iv. 11, 16–18; Gal. iii. 7, 29).

justified. The word[1] translated 'justify' sometimes has the meaning 'make just'; but here, as constantly in the Pauline Epistles[2], it means 'account as righteous.' It represents a Hebrew word[3], which is generally used of a judge (actual or figurative) declaring that an accused person is innocent, i.e. acquitting him; or that a suitor has the law on his side, i.e. deciding in his favour. It was possible to 'justify the wicked for a reward' (Isa. v. 23), i.e. to take a bribe to acquit the guilty, or to decide against a suitor who had evidence and right on his side in the sight of the law. Hence James means that God will not acquit a man—treat him as innocent, liable to no penalty, but entitled to full rights of citizenship in the kingdom—merely because the man believes; his faith must be attested by his conduct.

by works. Whereas, according to Paul, 'We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law' (Rom. iii. 28; cf. Gal. ii. 16), of which Abraham is a special example (Rom. iv; Gal. iii). Paul appeals to Gen. xv. 6, 'He believed in Jehovah, and he counted it to him for righteousness (justification).' James probably had in mind Gen. xxii. 12, 'I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me'; and might have argued from it that though Abraham's faith had long been manifest, there was, according to Genesis, no clear evidence of his loyalty to God until the sacrifice of Isaac.

offered up. As far as Abraham's intention was concerned the offering was complete. Heb. xi. 17–19 cites the sacrifice of Isaac as an example of the faith of Abraham. Cf. verse 23.

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[1] *δικαιόω.*

[2] It does not occur in Hebrews.

[3] Hiçdîq.

that faith wrought with his works, and by works was
23 faith made perfect; and the scripture was fulfilled which
saith, And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned
unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend
24 of God. Ye see that by works a man is justified, and
25 not only by faith. And in like manner was not also

22. Thou seest: A. V. and R. V. marg., 'Seest thou?'; the difference does not affect the sense.

faith wrought with his works. His faith was active, not so much intellectually in recognizing the truth of doctrine, but in practical obedience; it reinforced conscience and loyalty to God.

by works was faith made perfect. Faith, at first a mere seed, grew up, came to maturity, by exercising itself in practical obedience.

23. the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God, &c. The sacrifice of Isaac was the supreme act which manifested the faith of Abraham. The quotation, as in Paul, follows the LXX of Gen. xv. 6 (R. V. of the Hebrew, 'he counted it to him'). The meaning of Gen. xv. 6 is that God regarded with approval Abraham's trust in Him, and accepted it as a sufficient ground for receiving him into His favour. Cf. Ps. cvi. 30, 31, 'Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgement, . . . and that was counted unto him for righteousness.'

and he was called the friend of God. So in the Hebrew—Isa. xli. 8, God being the speaker, 'Abraham, my friend'; LXX, 'Abraham whom I loved'; 2 Chron. xx. 7, God being addressed, 'Abraham thy friend'; LXX, 'thy beloved.' Philo[1], however, quotes Gen. xviii. 17 thus—'Shall I hide (this) from Abraham my friend?' This reading is not found in any other authority[2], but it was probably once current in some MSS. of the LXX; and Gen. xviii. 17 is probably the passage which James has in mind[3]. Clement of Rome and other early Fathers speak of Abraham as 'the friend of God.' The Greek philosophers use the phrase of the wise man, and Wisd. of Sol. vii. 27 of the holy man: cf. John xv. 14, 15. 'The friend of God' has become almost the name of Abraham amongst the Mohammedans. The king's 'Friend' was an official title at Eastern courts.

25. was not . . . Rahab . . . justified by works, in that she

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[1] *De Sobrietate,* 11.

[2] The Hebrew has simply 'from Abraham'; the LXX and Syriac, 'from Abraham my servant.'

[3] Ryle, *Philo and Holy Scripture,* in loco.

Rahab the harlot justified by works, in that she received the messengers, and sent them out another way? For as 26 the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

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received the messengers, &c. Cf. Joshua ii. 7. In Heb. xi. 31 this act is cited as shewing the faith of Rahab. Clement of Rome[1] states that Rahab 'was saved by faith and hospitality.'

26. as the body apart from the spirit is dead, &c. Death is shewn by absence of movement and by putrefaction; so faith, apart from practical holiness, shews no activity and becomes corrupt.

General Note on the Relation of ii. 14–26 to the Teaching of Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

i. *There is a formal contradiction between the language of James and that of Paul and Hebrews.*

The parallels cited in the previous notes shew that according to Paul a man is justified by faith and not by works, whereas in James a man is justified by works and not by faith only. In Heb. xi. faith is described as the moving force of the consecrated activity and endurance of the saints. In Hebrews we read of 'dead works,' but in James of 'dead faith'; in Paul and Hebrews Abraham and Rahab are examples of 'faith,' in James of 'works.'

ii. *This contradiction is not accidental; it cannot have arisen out of the independent treatment of the subject by James on the one hand, and Paul and Hebrews on the other.*

This follows from the form of the statements; each writer not merely asserts his own view, but negatives contrary teaching, which he is anxious to refute.

iii. *The contradiction, however, was not between the apostles themselves, but between each of them, and teachers who inculcated a distorted form of the doctrine of the other.*

There is nothing in any of the Epistles concerned to suggest that either of the apostles had before him an Epistle or Epistles written by the other. In Galatians Paul enters into detail as to his relations with James; and if he had been controverting the arguments of a letter written by that Apostle, he would surely have mentioned the fact. Paul's polemic is obviously against the general Judaizing doctrine of the importance of works, and not against this particular passage. It is sometimes maintained[2] that salvation by faith was a familiar topic in the Rabbinical schools at the beginning of the Christian era, and that the Rabbinical treatment of the subject furnishes the connexion between Paul and James. Paul, it is suggested, adapted Rabbinical formulæ and arguments to the expression of Christian truth; but many Jews used the same phrases to express mistaken views, and it is this Jewish misuse of language which James attacks.

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[1] i. 12.

[2] Cf. Lightfoot, *Galatians*, pp. 158–164.

We cannot be certain, however, that the passages cited from the Mishna, &c., really represent the condition of Jewish thought in the time of the apostles. Moreover, it is maintained that the technical phrases, 'justification by faith,' &c., cannot be traced earlier than the Pauline Epistles, and were probably invented by Paul.

An alternative view of the relation between the teaching of the two apostles would be to suppose that James is attacking some such perversions of Pauline doctrine, as Paul himself denounces in Rom. vi. and Gal. ii. 17–21, v. 13–15.

The view maintained below that the contradiction is merely one of form would afford further evidence that James is not criticizing Romans or Galatians.

iv. *The contradiction is merely formal, while the teaching of James is consistent with that of Paul.*

It must be admitted that weighty authorities have held that the statements of the two apostles cannot be reconciled. For instance, the *Table Talk* reports that Luther said: 'Many have laboured and given themselves great trouble to reconcile the Epistle of James with Paul's teaching, as Melanchthon had, in treating of the subject in his *Apology*, but not very seriously, for the statements that faith justifies, and faith does not justify, are direct contraries. Whoever can make them chime together, to him will I give my doctor's cap and will stand reproved for a fool[1].'

Luther, however, did not sufficiently consider that words mean different things to different men. When we examine what each of the two apostles really meant, the contradiction disappears. 'Faith' to Paul was the attitude of personal trust and submission towards God; to James, an intellectual assent to a doctrine. The 'faith' of which the latter wrote was held by devils; but no one can read Romans and Galatians and imagine that the devils could 'believe' in the Pauline sense of the word. Then, in speaking of 'works,' Paul has in mind the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic ritual, while James is thinking of a holy and beneficent life. We come nearer to a real difference in the word 'justify,' because both use it in a very similar sense; yet even here the application is not the same. Paul is absorbed in the initial justification, the act by which man, estranged by sin, is set right with God; this is a justification, not by works, but by faith, by a man's new attitude towards God through the work of Christ. But this is quite consistent with James's justification by works, by

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[1] Cf. *Ind. Evgl. Rev.*, Jan., 1900.

Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we **3**
shall receive heavier judgement. For in many things we 2
all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is
a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. Now if 3

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which he means that a right relation to God is maintained and fulfilled in a righteous life inspired by faith. Paul is thinking of the justification with which the Christian life begins, and the nomenclature of dogmatics has confined the use of the word to this initial act. But the Greek word could also be used for the vindication of the reality of Christian character through a consistent life, and it is so used by James[1].

iii. 1, 2. *The tongue.*

Do not be eager to teach others. It is difficult to control the tongue in ordinary life, a task in which only the very greatest saints succeed. For a teacher the task is still more difficult, the harm done by failure is more serious, and the responsibility proportionally greater.

1. Be not many teachers. iii. 1–iv. 12 expand and expound i. 19, 20. The necessity for the advice given here is shewn by 1 Cor. xiv. 20-33, from which we gather that the eagerness of the Christians to speak in public reduced their meetings to a perfect babel. The great Stoic philosopher Epictetus said similarly in answer to those who professed a desire to 'live as sages and do good to men,' 'What good? What wilt thou do? Hast thou done good to thyself? But thou wouldst exhort them? And hast thou exhorted thyself? Thou wouldst do them good—then do not chatter to them, but shew them in thyself what manner of men philosophy can make[2].' Cf. Portia's words in the *Merchant of Venice*[3]: 'I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow my own teaching.'

2. perfect, 'mature' (cf. i. 4). The control of the tongue being only attained at an advanced stage of the spiritual life, those addressed, who 'all stumble in many things,' have obviously not acquired this gift, and are not suited to be teachers. Their uncontrollable tongues would lead them into reckless statements and exhibitions of bad temper.

iii. 3, 4, 5^a. *Its power.*

The tongue controls the much larger body, just as a bridle guides a horse, or a rudder a ship.

3. Now if . . . we turn about: A. V., with inferior MSS., 'Behold . . . and we turn about.'

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[1] Cf. Garvie, *Rom., Cent. Bible*, p. 24.

[2] *Dissertations*, iii. 13 (Rolleston's translation).

[3] Act i, Sc. 2.

we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, that they may
4 obey us, we turn about their whole body also. Behold,
the ships also, though they are so great, and are driven
by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small
rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth.
5 So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great
things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how
6 small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of
iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth

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mouths. Here, as in the case of a man's tongue, the whole body is governed by controlling the mouth. This part of the parallel is apparent only, and not real.

4. very small: in proportion to the size of the ships.

rudder . . . steersman: A. V., less accurately, 'helm . . . governor.' The rudder on an ancient ship was an oar or a paddle, working in a rowlock or port-hole. A ship had two of these, one on each side of the stern.

5 ^{a}. boasteth great things. The context implies that the boasting is justified; the tongue really controls men. 'Boast' is scarcely the word we should have expected; it is apparently used to suggest the undue self-assertion into which the tongue often betrays men.

iii. 5 ^{b}, 6. *Its mischievousness.*

A bridle and a rudder are figures of the great power exercised by so small a thing as the tongue; similarly, the widespread ruin often caused by a tiny spark illustrates the immense mischief constantly wrought by that little member.

5 ^{b}. how much wood: rather, as R. V. marg., 'how great a forest'; certainly not, as A. V., 'how great a matter.'

how small a fire! A. V., with inferior MSS., 'a little fire.'

6. The general sense of this verse is obviously that the little tongue does immense harm; but the language used is obscure and its exact meaning uncertain.

the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue. 'The world of iniquity' probably means 'the iniquitous world,' 'the wicked world.' The 'world[1]' is the evil element amongst mankind, and the tongue is the corresponding evil element in the body. It is largely occupied with causing, or suggesting, or speaking evil.

defileth the whole body. Cf. Mark vii. 22, 23, '. . . deceit,

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[1] *κόσμος*, see on i. 27.

the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature,
and is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beasts and 7
birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed,
and hath been tamed by mankind: but the tongue can 8

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lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within, and defile the man.' The tongue is not only a chief instrument of such vices in its owner, but also the means by which he induces them in others.

setteth on fire. A figure for 'initiates the destruction of' or 'the evil working of.'

the wheel of nature[1]. A meaningless phrase to an English reader. R. V. marg., 'wheel of birth,' and A. V., 'course of nature,' are also obscure. The Greek is variously interpreted. Thus Prof. Mayor explains the phrase from 'the shape of the wheel . . . the circle or sphere of this earthly life, meaning all that is contained in our life'; and further seems to adopt a suggestive but improbable view, that the fire here is the overheated axle which sets fire to the wheel. Others explain the phrase, 'our changeful life,' from the rapid motion of a wheel (cf. the 'wheel of fortune'), or the 'orb or cycle of creation,' &c.

The word translated 'wheel' may also mean 'course'; and the analogy of i. 23 and 'world of iniquity' suggests that 'of nature' denotes a quality of the 'wheel' or 'course.' Possibly it is an awkward attempt of James to represent in Greek some Aramaic phrase for 'natural impulses' or 'passions.'

hell: in the Greek *Gehenna*, the place of evil spirits; here used for Satan, as the inspirer of the tongue in its evil activities.

R. V. marg., by changes in the punctuation, obtains two alternative renderings: (*a*) 'The tongue is a fire, that world of iniquity: the tongue is among our members that which,' &c. According to this rendering, fire, the evil, destroying element, is the world of iniquity. (*b*) 'That world of iniquity, the tongue, is among our members that which,' &c. This is similar to the R. V. text.

iii. 7, 8. *Not to be tamed.*

While men have tamed every kind of living creature, no one can tame the tongue: it is more truculent and venomous than any beast.

7. kind . . . mankind: *lit.* 'nature . . . human nature.'

8. the tongue can no man tame. This need not be taken literally to mean that no individual can control his own tongue. It may be a rhetorical hyperbole.

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[1] *τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως*: cf. i. 23, 'his natural face,' *τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως.*

no man tame; *it is* a restless evil, *it is* full of deadly
9 poison. Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and
therewith curse we men, which are made after the likeness
10 of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing
and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to
11 be. Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening
12 sweet *water* and bitter? can a fig tree, my brethren,
yield olives, or a vine figs? neither *can* salt water yield
sweet.

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? let him

restless. The same word is translated 'unstable' in i. 8. A. V., with some ancient authorities, has 'unruly.'

iii. 9-12. *Fickle.*

The tongue, moreover, is fickle; a tree can be depended on to produce one kind of fruit, and a spring one sort of water; but the tongue sometimes blesses and sometimes curses.

9. the Lord and Father: a unique expression; A. V., with inferior MSS., 'God even the Father.'

after the likeness of God: Gen. i. 26.

10. cursing: here probably in the sense of abusive railing.

12. neither can salt water yield sweet. A curious expression, modified in inferior MSS. to 'So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh'; so A. V.

The idea of the true text seems to be that as a tree can only produce fruit, and a spring water, of one kind, so the utterances of a tongue will be of one kind, i. e. the tongue which indulges in ill-natured abuse is incapable of true praise of God; the abuse can no more pass into praise than salt water can change to fresh. 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen' (1 John iv. 20).

iii. 13-18. *The true wisdom.*

Such bitter railing is inspired by a jealous and quarrelsome spirit. If you harbour this spirit, your claim to possess the wisdom of Christ is a false and empty boast; and your wisdom comes from Satan, and issues in every kind of evil. The wisdom from above inspires mutual kindliness and good feeling, and thus leads to a holy life.

13. understanding[1]: A. V., 'endued with knowledge.' According to Mayor, 'used in classical Greek for a skilled or scientific person as opposed to one who has no special knowledge or training.'

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[1] ἐπιστήμων, only here in the N. T.

shew by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom.
But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, 14
glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is 15
not *a wisdom* that cometh down from above, but is
earthly, sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and fac- 16
tion are, there is confusion and every vile deed. But the 17

Here the man who thinks himself 'wise and understanding' is the professing Christian, who supposes that he has attained to spiritual enlightenment, and is eager to display his wisdom by teaching others.

life[1]: A. V., 'conversation' (see on 1 Pet. i. 15).

in meekness of wisdom. If you are wise, shew it by living in the meek spirit which wisdom inspires. Conduct is the criterion of wisdom as well as of faith (ii. 18). Contrast this verse with the idea of a king

> 'Who never said a foolish thing,
> And never did a wise one.'

For 'meekness' see on 1 Pet. iii. 4.

14. faction[2]: by etymology the mercenary service of a hireling; and so generally the zeal a man shews for a party or for opinions because they are *his*, not because they are Christ's. The eagerness of James's readers to teach had evidently led to angry controversy.

lie: by claiming a wisdom which their bitter railing shewed they did not possess.

the truth: either, simply, 'the facts of the case,' or Christianity, which was discredited when such men put themselves forward as its exponents.

15. earthly: limited to material things, and wholly lacking in spiritual illumination.

sensual: R. V. marg., 'natural' or 'animal[3],' i. e. limited to the mere animal life, and wholly lacking any fellowship with the Divine Spirit. Thus 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.'

devilish: *lit.* 'demoniacal,' inspired by such malignant beings as those whom Jesus cast out from the unfortunate beings who were possessed by them. The tongue which was eager to expound such wisdom might well be said to be 'set on fire by hell' (verse 6).

16. confusion[4]: the noun corresponding to the adjectives

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[1] ἀναστροφή.

[2] ἐριθεία, only elsewhere in verse 16, and in the Pauline Epistles; grouped with 'jealousy,' ζῆλος, in 2 Cor. xii. 20; Gal. v. 20.

[3] ψυχική, only elsewhere in Jude 19 and 1 Cor. (four times).

[4] ἀκαταστασία.

wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable,
gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits,
18 without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of
righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace.

translated 'unstable' (i. 8) and 'restless' (iii. 8). It is used in 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 'God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.' It is the disorderliness caused by selfish quarrels.

17. pure[1]. This word and its cognates are comparatively rare in the N. T., being chiefly found in the Pauline Epistles. These words are used in the LXX for the ceremonial cleanness required by the Levitical law; but this is not what James refers to here. In classical Greek the word is defined as 'filled with religious awe; sacred, undefiled, impartial,' &c. It has been pointed out[2] that it implies just that susceptibility to the influence of the spirit, the absence of which is denoted by 'earthly, sensual, devilish.' Perhaps the term 'consecrated,' as used in the phrase 'a consecrated life,' would best express the meaning here (cf. Phil. i. 16; 1 Pet. iii. 2; 1 John iii. 3). It is sometimes used in the N. T. in the special sense of 'chaste' (2 Cor. xi. 2, &c.); but obviously its meaning cannot be so narrowly limited here. In Matt. v. 8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,' a different Greek word[3] is used.

gentle. See on 1 Pet. ii. 18.

easy to be intreated[4]: rather 'docile'; the opposite term[5] is constantly used in the N. T. to mean 'disobedient.'

mercy. See on ii. 13.

without variance[6]: i. e. not given to disputing. R. V. marg., 'without doubtfulness,' i. e. having an assured faith, free from double-mindedness (i. 8). This latter is the more probable rendering. The other R. V. marg., 'without partiality' = A. V., has little in its favour.

18. the fruit of righteousness is sown: i. e. the seed is sown from which the fruit is produced.

in peace: not in the bitter controversies which these would-be teachers were eager to set on foot. Cf. Isa. xxxii. 17.

for them that make peace: rather, as R. V. marg., 'by them that make peace.'

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[1] *ἁγνή.* [2] H. von Soden. [3] *καθαρός*, clean.

[4] *εὐπειθής*, only here in the N. T. [5] *ἀπειθής.*

[6] *ἀδιάκριτος*, only here in the N. T.; the positive verb *διακρίνειν*, in its various forms, is used to denote 'to discuss, discern, differ, doubt' (so i. 6, ii. 4).

Whence *come* wars and whence *come* fightings among 4
you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your pleasures that
war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, 2
and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye
have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, 3

iv. 1-3. *Unruly greed.*

The real cause of your quarrels is not any devotion to truth, but the craving for personal gratification. You seek this not by prayer, but by strife; even if you pray, your prayers are vain, because they are inspired by selfish greed.

1. wars . . . fightings among you: quarrels between professing Christians, including, no doubt, disputes on doctrine, on the management of church affairs, and on the choice of leaders, iii. 1, 14.

pleasures[1]. Used here, as usual, in a bad sense, to mean the sinful gratification of selfish or wrong cravings. As these 'pleasures' were the cause of dissension, the lust for power, pre-eminence and revenge, and for the humiliation of rivals would be conspicuous. Cf. 1 Pet. ii. 11.

2. lust: eagerly desire such gratifications as the above.

ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain. The present text, which is found substantially in all the ancient authorities, presents insuperable difficulties. 'Kill' is out of place; 'kill, covet,' &c., gives an anti-climax; nor can 'kill' be simply a rhetorical exaggeration for 'hate.' Something may be gained by a change in the punctuation, thus: 'Ye lust, and have not; ye kill. And ye covet, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war.' But even so, the construction of the sentence is clumsy; there is still an anti-climax in passing from 'kill' to 'fight and war'; and it is difficult to believe that James would charge professing Christians with the habit of committing murder in this matter-of-fact way[2]. Probably there has been some early mistake in copying the text, and we should read 'ye are envious[3]' for 'ye kill[4].' This emendation would give us, translating literally, 'ye are envious and jealous.'

ask, in prayer. A touch of irony which suggests most forcibly the incompatibility of such conduct with the profession of Christianity.

3. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, &c. Lest irony should be misunderstood, James puts the point directly. Prayers suggested by 'devilish' wisdom (iii. 15) and uttered by a tongue 'set on fire by hell' (iii. 6) could not obtain what they sought. Hence i. 5 and Matt. vii. 7, 8 are conditional.

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[1] *ἡδονή.*

[2] Cf. further on v. 6.

[3] *φθονεῖτε.*

[4] *φονεύετε.*

because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend *it* in your
4 pleasures. Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an
5 enemy of God. Or think ye that the scripture speaketh in vain? Doth the spirit which he made to dwell in us

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spend *it* in your pleasures. They would ask for prosperity, for influence, leadership in the church, knowledge, wisdom, and the gift of attractive and persuasive utterance, but solely that they might gratify selfish and sinful desires.

iv. 4–6. *The world and God.*

You deny the truth of my accusations, but they are proved by your eagerness to stand well with the world which is alienated from God. If you bestow your friendship on the world, you make yourselves God's enemies; for His jealous affection will not allow you to be friends with Him and with His enemies at the same time, neither will He tolerate the arrogant self-assertion which your worldly ambition inspires.

4. adulteresses. There is no satisfactory explanation of the Apostle's use of this word here. It is commonly explained to mean 'adulterous souls,' 'adulterous' being used, as such terms often are in the O. T. (Deut. xxxi. 16, &c.), of those who forsake the true God for some other object of worship, here worldly advantage. The word is sometimes regarded as the conclusion of verse 3, thus: 'That ye may spend it in your pleasures, ye adulteresses! Know ye not,' &c. The A. V., following inferior MSS., simplifies matters by reading 'Ye adulterers and adulteresses.' Most of the ancient versions have 'Ye adulterers'; they probably read 'adulteresses,' but translated freely to suit their ideas of the sense.

friendship of the world: i. e. their friendship towards the world. For 'world' see on i. 27.

5. the scripture. The quotation in this verse is not found anywhere in the O. T. It may be (*a*) a very free paraphrase of passages like Exod. xx. 5, which speak of 'a jealous God'; or (*b*) a quotation from some lost apocryphal work; or (*c*)—but much less probably—the reference may be to the quotation in verse 6, the intervening words being parenthetic.

speaketh in vain: i. e. that the truth of its statement is uncertain, and that its words have no authoritative claim on our attention; for 'speaketh,' 'saith,' introducing a quotation.

Doth the spirit which he made to dwell in us long unto envying? i. e. Does the spirit of Christ which he has given his disciples inspire them with the eager craving for self-indulgence which makes men envy one another?

long unto envying? But he giveth more grace. Where- 6
fore *the scripture* saith, God resisteth the proud, but
giveth grace to the humble. Be subject therefore unto 7
God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse 8
your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye

It is doubtful, however, whether this is the meaning of the original, which is very obscure.

The A. V. makes the quotation not a question, but a statement, and translates a somewhat different text thus, 'The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy,' making the words a description of the depraved spirit of the natural man.

The R. V. marg. offers us two alternatives: (*a*) 'The spirit which he made to dwell in us he yearneth for even unto jealous envy, i. e. according to the figure of Gen. ii. 7, man's spirit is the breath of God, and thus God yearns for man's love, and cannot bear that any portion of it should be given to His enemies. (*b*) 'That spirit which he made to dwell in us yearneth for us even unto jealous envy.' This is practically equivalent to the preceding; God's Spirit, indwelling in man through Christ, craves his undivided love. Probably one of the renderings of the R. V. marg. should be adopted, as the most suitable to the context.

6. But he giveth more grace. The more earnest God's desire for man's love, the greater grace He bestows upon him.

God resisteth the proud, &c. Prov. iii. 34. The quotation is taken from the LXX, except that the latter has 'The Lord resisteth,' &c. The Hebrew has 'Surely he scorneth the scorners, but giveth grace.' &c. The same quotation, in exactly the same words as here, occurs in 1 Pet. v. 5.

Pride refuses to yield to God, humility submits to the most exacting demands of the Divine love; each receives appropriate treatment.

iv. 7-10. *God the rightful Master.*

Yield therefore to God; conform your lives to His will in a spirit of penitent humility, and He will accept you. Do not fear the powers of evil, for they are easily vanquished if you resist them.

7. the devil: the representative of the 'world.' Cf. our Lord's experience at his temptation.

8. purify. Cf. on iii. 17; here the verb means 'put aside all hesitation, and consecrate your hearts wholly to God.' The same phrase occurs in 1 Pet. i. 22.

9 doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let
your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to
10 heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord,
and he shall exalt you.

11 Speak not one against another, brethren. He that
speaketh against a brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh
against the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judgest
the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.
12 One *only* is the lawgiver and judge, *even* he who is able
to save and to destroy: but who art thou that judgest
thy neighbour?

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doubleminded. Cf. i. 8.

9. Be afflicted, &c.: on account of their sin.

10. he shall exalt you. Cf. Matt. xxiii. 12; 1 Pet. v. 6.

iv. 11, 12. *The duty of brotherliness.*

In order to conform to the Divine will, you must live in charity with the brethren, and refrain from slander and fault-finding. If you set yourselves up as judges, you offend against the majesty of the Divine law, whose functions you usurp.

11. Speak not one against another. The Apostle returns to a subject which was evidently very much on his mind. Cf. i. 19, 26; ii. 12; iii. 9, 16; iv. 1; v. 9.

speaketh against the law, &c. The general sense of these verses is clear (cf. above), but the exact interpretation of details is uncertain. Lucid expression seems to have been sacrificed to epigrammatic form. The idea seems to be that judgement is provided for by law, and not left to individual caprice. Irresponsible fault-finding implies that the judgements of the law are inadequate. Another interpretation is that 'the law of liberty' (i. 25) forbids judging (Matt. vii. 1, 2), therefore judging breaks the law, and so 'speaks against' and 'judges' it.

12. One only: i. e. God.

able to save, &c. Cf. Matt. x. 28.

who art thou that judgest, &c. Cf. Rom. xiv. 4, 10-13; 1 Cor. x. 29.

iv. 13-17. *The uncertainty of life.*

Submission to the Divine will is not consistent with confidence in far-reaching plans for the acquisition of wealth, or for any kind of personal advantage. Life is so frail and transitory that boasts as to the future are absurd, and—to those who might know better—even wicked.

Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will 13
go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and
get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the 14
morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapour, that
appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.
For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both 15
live, and do this or that. But now ye glory in your 16
vauntings: all such glorying is evil. To him therefore 17
that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.
Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries **5**

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13. Go to now. An obsolete Elizabethan phrase, explained '"Come, come, take the right course"; spoken sometimes sarcastically [as here], sometimes encouragingly[1].'

14. on the morrow. Much less a year hence.

15. Ye are[2] a vapour. A. V., 'it is[3] even a vapour,' with some ancient authorities; others, 'it will be[4].' Cf. Job vii. 7; Ps. cii. 3.

17. knoweth: as an enlightened Christian.

to do good: to accept the fact that the future is entirely dependent on God, and to act accordingly.

v. 1–6. *The doom of oppressors.*

Woe unto you that are rich, and have hoarded wealth, or lived in wanton luxury, amidst misery which you have aggravated by defrauding your labourers of their just wages, and by procuring the condemnation and punishment of the innocent.

1. Go to. See on iv. 13.

ye rich. As the letter is addressed to Christians—note 'brethren,' i. 2; ii. 1, 14; iii. 1, 10, 12; iv. 11; v. 7, 12, 19—it seems natural to understand 'rich' as 'rich (professing) Christians.' We should prefer to suppose that rich heathen are denounced in these verses, and some scholars have taken this view. Note that the 'rich' are not addressed as 'brethren.' But the language is not stronger than in other paragraphs, e.g. iv. 1, 2, which are generally accepted as addressed to Christians. In some respects the exposition of the book would be easier if it were taken to be notes of exhortations delivered to a mixed audience.

weep and howl. We must bear in mind that Orientals are extremely demonstrative in the expression of emotion.

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[1] Article 'Go' in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*.

[2] *ἐστέ.* [3] *ἐστί.* [4] *ἔσται.*

2 that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted,
3 and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your
silver are rusted; and their rust shall be for a testimony
against you, and shall eat your flesh as fire. Ye have
4 laid up your treasure in the last days. Behold, the hire
of the labourers who mowed your fields, which is of you
kept back by fraud, crieth out: and the cries of them
that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sa-
5 baoth. Ye have lived delicately on the earth, and taken

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coming upon you: i. e. are close at hand.

2, 3. corrupted . . . moth-eaten . . . rusted: prophetic perfects; the inevitable fate of their wealth is set forth as if it were already realized.

their rust shall be for a testimony against (R. V. marg., 'unto') **you**, as having broken Christ's injunction, 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth consume' (Matt. vi. 19, 20).

3. shall eat your flesh as fire. The eating away of metal by rust suggests the idea of selfish greed resulting in corruption which eats into the flesh—the flesh being either understood literally or used as a figure for the lower unspiritual life. Avarice and sinful self-indulgence defeat their own ends and issue in misery, even as regards the flesh.

in the last days: immediately before the coming of Christ, when there would not be time to enjoy the treasure, and when spiritually-minded men should have been occupied by other matters. For many wealthy Jews this warning was fulfilled shortly before the Fall of Jerusalem, A. D. 70; they were ruined and murdered, often with cruel tortures. For the individual the imminence of the future life makes these sayings of the Apostle always true, quite apart from all theories as to the second coming. A. V. has 'for the last days'—an inaccurate translation.

4. mowed: a different word[1] from that translated 'reaped[2].' Both words, however, are general terms for gathering in crops; hence A. V. translates both by 'reaped.'

kept back by fraud: it is uncertain whether the original Greek read 'kept in arrears' or 'permanently withheld.'

Lord of Sabaoth: i. e. Jehovah Sabaoth, an ancient title of the God of Israel, commonly translated 'Lord of Hosts.' The your pleasure; ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned, ye have killed the 6 righteous *one*; he doth not resist you.

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[1] ἀμάω. [2] θερίζω.

Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the 7

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phrase 'Lord of Sabaoth' only occurs elsewhere in the N. T. in Rom. ix. 29, a quotation from Isaiah.

On this verse generally cf. Deut. xxiv. 15; Jer. xxii. 13.

5. lived delicately . . . taken your pleasure: an inadequate translation; the Greek words have a bad sense in themselves, and imply excess and debauchery. Cf. 2 Pet. ii. 13.

nourished your hearts: a unique expression, = 'Ye have been absorbed in self-indulgence, and therefore without susceptibility to the influence of the Spirit.' 'Heart' in the Bible refers to the intellect almost more than to the emotions.

day of slaughter: an O. T. phrase (Jer. xii. 3, xxv. 34) for such Divine visitations as the siege and sack of Jerusalem.

6. the righteous one: or, as A. V., 'the Just'; sometimes supposed to refer to the Jews and Christ, as in Acts vii. 52, but rather a general statement. The rich used their influence to coerce, or their wealth to bribe, judges into condemning innocent men who were obnoxious to them. Cf. Jezebel and Naboth. The history of persecution and of contending sects and rival ecclesiastics will shew that such crimes have constantly been committed, not merely by professing Christians, but even in the name of the church and of Christ himself.

he doth not resist you. They were deaf to the silent appeal of patient helplessness. The following paragraph intimates that the righteous would not long be at the mercy of their oppressors.

v. 7–11. *Encouragement in patient endurance.*

Ye, brethren, who suffer such things, remember that the coming of the Lord is at hand. Wait patiently, as the farmer waits for his crops. Do not let your troubles make you fretful with one another; the coming of the Lord brings judgement as well as deliverance. Endure as Job and the prophets endured; the loving-kindness of God shall abundantly recompense you.

7. Be patient, here and in verse 8, and 'patience' in verse 10, translate words[1] often rendered 'longsuffering,' and denote the spirit which prevents the sufferer from complaining, or from being led by his suffering into unworthy words or deeds.

coming of the Lord. This 'coming' or *parousia* is only

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[1] *μακροθυμέω, μακροθυμία.*

Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receive
8 the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand.
9 Murmur not, brethren, one against another, that ye be not judged: behold, the judge standeth before the doors.
10 Take, brethren, for an example of suffering and of

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mentioned elsewhere in the N. T. in verse 8, in Matthew (4 times), in the Pauline Epistles (15 times), in 2 Peter (i. 16, iii. 4, 12), and in 1 John (ii. 28). The same event is also spoken of as the 'Revelation of Jesus Christ,' 1 Pet. i. 7, &c. (which see), and the 'Manifestation (of the Lord),' &c., in the Pastoral Epistles, e. g. 1 Tim. vi. 14. Thessalonians and 1 Peter are largely taken up with this subject. The first generation of Christians expected to witness in the near future (verses 8 and 10) the personal reappearence of Christ on the earth to close the old dispensation by punishing unbelievers, and delivering the Christians. These expectations were partly realized when the fall of Jerusalem closed the old Jewish dispensation by the destruction of the Temple and the final cessation of the Levitical worship of Jehovah. At the same time misery and ruin befell the Jewish nation which had rejected and crucified our Lord. As regards any more exact fulfilment, the statements of the N. T. must be interpreted according to the principle laid down in 2 Pet. iii. 8, 'One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' Cf. also on verse 3, and cf. 1 John ii. 18.

waiteth: between the sowing and the reaping, while he himself can do little or nothing, a period of at least three months.

the early and latter rain: in autumn and spring respectively. At the present time, however, wet weather continues from about the end of October to March, and there are not two distinct rainy seasons separated by a period of fine weather. The phrase is from the O. T., Deut. xi. 14, &c.

8. stablish your hearts: take courage and be firm, brace yourselves.

9. Murmur not . . . one against another. This exhortation is not suggested by the immediate context, but by the Apostle's anxiety—evident throughout the Epistle, cf. iv. 11—to correct the quarrelsome spirit of his readers.

the judge: Christ.

10. an example of suffering and of patience, the prophets. Micaiah ben Imlah, 1 Kings xxii. 27; Isa. viii. 16-18; Jer. xx, xxvi, xxxii. 1-5, xxxviii. 1-13, &c.

patience, the prophets who spake in the name of the Lord.
Behold, we call them blessed which endured: ye have 11
heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the
Lord, how that the Lord is full of pity, and merciful.

But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither 12
by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath:
but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall
not under judgement.

Is any among you suffering? let him pray. Is any 13

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patience: rather as R. V. marg., 'endurance'; a different word[1] from that used in verse 11.

11. we call them blessed which endured. Perhaps a reminiscence of the Greek version of Dan. xii. 12, 'Blessed is he that endureth.'

and have seen the end of the Lord. If this clause stood by itself we should naturally understand 'the end of the Lord' to mean the Passion of Christ as the supreme 'example of suffering and patience.' In Matt. xxvi. 58 Peter goes into the court of the high priest 'to see the end' of the trial of Christ; and in Luke xxii. 37 our Lord says, 'That which concerneth me hath an end.' This view has been taken by some scholars, but it is scarcely correct in view of the following clause. We should therefore rather take 'the end of the Lord' to mean the blessed end to which the Lord brought the sufferings of Job.

full of pity, and merciful. A reminiscence of such passages as Pss. ciii. 8, cxi. 4.

v. 12. *Oaths.*

Most especially refrain from taking an oath.

12. above all things: evidently indicating a connexion with the general context. Perhaps = 'In your bitter controversies specially refrain from taking an oath that your views are correct, or that you will not associate with those who differ from you,' &c.

swear not: a reminiscence of our Lord's more sweeping utterance, 'Swear not at all': cf. Matt. v. 33-37. Our passage does not raise the question of oaths required by judicial authority, which are nowhere referred to or suggested in the Epistle; but forbids the spontaneous taking of oaths to emphasize one's own opinion, a practice closely akin to profane swearing.

v. 13-18. *Praise and prayer.*

Every experience and emergency has its appropriate means of

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[1] ὑπομονή, see on 2 Pet. i. 6.

14 cheerful? let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the
15 Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed
16 sins, it shall be forgiven him. Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be

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grace. Praise is meet for seasons of gladness; prayer for times of suffering and sickness, and consciousness of sin. The prayers of a righteous man are effectual; remember Elijah and the famine.

13. suffering: especially at the hands of others. Let him not fret or rail, but pray.

14. anointing him with oil. A very common remedy in ancient times. We might paraphrase in more modern fashion, 'Use medicine, and pray that it may be blessed.'

This anointing, however, is often supposed to be merely a religious rite.

Sometimes the passage is understood to refer exclusively to the dying, and to promise only spiritual blessings, not physical recovery. It is then interpreted, 'Prayer shall save the dying man from the punishment of his sins; and, after his death, the Lord will raise him up in the resurrection.' This view is taken by some Protestant scholars[1]; and by Romanists, the passage thus interpreted is claimed as an authority for their sacrament of extreme unction.

15. if he have committed sins. The hypothetical form of the clause is remarkable. It is commonly explained, 'If his sickness is the result of some special sin'; cf. Mark ii. 1-12.

16. Confess . . . your sins . . . and pray . . . that ye may be healed. Sometimes closely connected with the preceding—note the 'therefore'—thus, 'Confide your sins to your brethren, that, if sickness befall you, they may make these sins matter of prayer, and you may be healed of your disease'; the forgiveness of sin was sometimes thought of as a condition of bodily healing. But even if the sins to be confessed are sins in general, the healing may be spiritual. Others understand the sins to be wrongs done to those to whom they are confessed—A. V., 'Confess your faults'—and the healing to be spiritual.

The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working: i. e. works so effectively as to bring about great and blessed results. For 'in its working' Prof. Mayor would render

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[1] e. g. von Soden.

healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth
much in its working. Elijah was a man of like passions 17
with us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain;
and it rained not on the earth for three years and six
months. And he prayed again; and the heaven gave 18
rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

My brethren, if any among you do err from the truth, 19
and one convert him; let him know, that he which con- 20

'when it is actuated or inspired by the Spirit.' The A. V. has, 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'

17. Elijah. Cf. 1 Kings xvii–xxi.

a man of like passions[1]**:** better as the R. V. marg., 'of like nature.'

prayed fervently: *lit.* 'prayed with prayer,' an imitation of a Hebrew idiom.

three years and six months. According to 1 Kings xviii. 1 the period was less than three years, the rain came 'in the third year,' i. e. according to the evident intention of the narrative, the third year of the famine. This period, however, is also spoken of as 'three years and six months' in Luke iv. 25. Perhaps Jewish tradition had misinterpreted Kings; or three and a half, as the half of seven, the perfect number, may have been used as a kind of round number. The narrative in Kings does not tell us that Elijah prayed; this again may be taken from tradition.

v. 19, 20. *The blessedness of converting sinners.*

Let your prayers for those who fall into sin be the more earnest, in that you seek the most precious of all boons, the salvation of an immortal soul.

19. err from the truth: *lit.* 'go astray from the truth,' i. e. fall into sin. The A. V., 'Converteth the sinner from the error of his way,' is misleading, because 'sinner' suggests some one not yet converted to Christianity, while the text contemplates a Christian who has gone astray.

convert: bring him back to the faith and obedience of Christ, the way of truth from which he wandered.

20. a sinner. The A. V., inaccurately 'the sinner.' Though James starts from the case of an erring brother, he enforces his exhortation by a perfectly general statement, which necessarily suggests the duty of seeking to convert those who have never known Christ.

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[1] ὁμοιοπαθής. Only elsewhere in the N. T., Acts xiv. 15.

verteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.

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save a soul. Some ancient authorities have 'his soul'; both expressions are ambiguous, and may refer either to the soul of the person who converts, or to that of the person converted. But the teaching of Scripture generally, and of this Epistle, require us to understand that it is the sinner's soul that is to be saved.

death: spiritual death.

cover a multitude of sins. Quotation from Prov. x. 12, also used in 1 Pet. iv. 8 (which see). Here the sins 'covered,' i. e. forgiven, are those of the sinner.

Note the abrupt ending. Verses 19, 20, do indeed deal with a very important topic; but they are neither a peroration, nor the logical conclusion of the Epistle. Moreover, all the usual formulæ for the end of a letter, personal references, farewell greeting, doxology, are absent. Cf. Introduction, p. 23.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF

PETER

PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are 1 sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappa-

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i. 1, 2. *Salutation.*

The apostle Peter greets the brethren scattered through Asia Minor; refers to the origin, nature, and purpose of their life in Christ; and wishes them increase of grace and peace.

1. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. In 2 Pet. i. 1 (which see), 'Simon (or Symeon) Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ.' Paul describes himself as 'an apostle of Jesus Christ (or Christ Jesus') in 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1; Eph. i. 1; Col. i. 1; 1 Tim. i. 1; 2 Tim. i. 1; Titus i. 1; and there are equivalent statements in Rom. i. 1 and Gal i. 1; in Phil. i. 1 he styles himself 'slave of Christ Jesus'; in Philem. 1, 'prisoner of Christ Jesus'; in 1 Thess. i. 1 and 2 Thess. i. 1 he simply styles himself 'Paul.' The authors of Hebrews and 1 John give neither name nor title; in Jas. i. 1 we have 'slave of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ,' in Jude i. 1 'a slave of Jesus Christ,' and in 2 John 1 and 3 John 1 'the elder.' On 'Jesus Christ' see Jas. i. 1.

to the elect: i. e. members of the Christian Church, as in Matt. xxiv. 22, 24; Rom. viii. 33; so called as called or chosen out of the world. The term is used in the LXX of the Israelites.

sojourners[1]. Only elsewhere in the N.T. in ii. 11 (which see), 'aliens and sojourners' of the readers, and Heb. xi. 13, 'strangers and sojourners' of the patriarchs, quoting Gen. xxiii. 4; the same phrase occurs in Ps. xxxix. 12. In both these passages the LXX has *paroikos* and *parepidemos*, as in ii. 11. The word is figurative, as in ii. 11, and strikes one of the keynotes of the Epistle; its readers are only sojourners in this world, and purely worldly affairs, even loss of property and bodily suffering, are only secondary matters to them. See also next note.

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[1] παρεπιδήμοις.

the Dispersion. Only elsewhere in the N.T., John vii. 35; Jas. i. 1; *lit.* 'the Jews dispersed throughout the world outside Palestine.' Here it is used figuratively of Christians generally; they have become, like the Jews, strangers in every land, with a heavenly Canaan: cf. Introduction, pp. 44 f.

Pontus. A district of Asia Minor, lying along the coast of the Black Sea, formally incorporated in the Roman Empire by Nero shortly before the probable date of this Epistle, A.D. 60–65. There are only two other references to this district in the N. T.: Jews from Pontus were present at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 9; and Aquila was a Jew of Pontus, Acts xviii. 2. Trapezus, the modern Trebizond, was an important town of Pontus. Under the celebrated Mithridates Pontus was the nucleus of a powerful kingdom which was overthrown by the Romans, B.C. 65. It was then governed for some time by dependent princes, whose status was similar to that of the rulers of the native states in India. Nothing is known of the first introduction of Christianity into Pontus; but about A.D. 110-112 the younger Pliny was governor of Pontus and Bithynia, and there is extant a correspondence between him and the emperor Trajan as to the Christians of his province. He reports to the emperor that the Christians were so numerous that the temples were almost deserted, and asks how he is to deal with them. The emperor replies that they are to be left alone as far as possible, but that notorious cases of obstinate Christianity must be punished. Marcion, a distinguished Gnostic of the first half of the second century, belonged to Pontus.

Galatia: the central district of Asia Minor. The orginal Galatia was a comparatively small territory in the north centre of Asia Minor. Originally Phrygian, it was conquered by Gaulish invaders about B.C. 277; later on it was governed by princes dependent on Rome, and passed under direct Roman rule. The Roman province of Galatia included large additions to the original Galatia, especially to the east and south. Its extent constantly varied, but in N. T. times it included the cities of Pisidia and Lycaonia, which Paul visited on his first and second, and perhaps also his third, missionary journeys. There were many Greeks both in the original Galatia and in the rest of the province.

It is matter of controversy whether the Galatia which Paul is said to have visited in Acts xvi. 6 (second journey), and xviii. 23 (third journey), and to which Galatians was addressed, was the original Galatia (North Galatian theory), or the southern district of the Roman province, the scene of the first journey (South Galatian theory).

The meaning of Galatia here will, in all probability, depend on the view taken of this controversy; but in any case Galatia in our passage is the district which Paul evangelized, and to which he docia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge 2

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addressed his Epistle. See also concluding note on these geographical terms.

It is worth noticing that the list of countries in Acts ii. does not include Galatia.

Cappadocia: the inland district east of Galatia and south of Pontus, formed into a Roman province in A.D. 17. Jews from Cappadocia were present on the Day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 9. The district is not mentioned elsewhere in the N. T., and nothing is known as to the first introduction of Christianity into the province, neither is it conspicuous in the history of the church in the first two centuries.

Asia: the Roman province so called, formed in B.C. 133. It extended along the east coast of the Levant, and included the districts anciently known as Mysia, Lydia, Caria, and Phrygia (the greater part). Its coasts were dotted with celebrated Greek cities, like Ephesus and Miletus. Ephesus and its neighbourhood had been for some time the scene of Paul's successful labours. Christianity flourished here from Paul's time onwards: Polycarp, for instance, was bishop of Smyrna, and Papias of Hierapolis. The 'seven churches' of Revelation belonged to Asia.

Bithynia lay along the coast of the Black Sea to the west of Pontus. It was bequeathed to Rome by its last king in B.C. 74, and united in a single province with Pontus. It is not mentioned in Acts ii. 9, the only other reference to it in the N.T. being Acts xvi. 7, 'They,' Paul and his companions, 'assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not.' This was on the second journey. We are told nothing as to the first introduction of Christianity into Bithynia, but we know that it flourished there at the beginning of the second century.

In N.T. times there was no general name in use corresponding to Asia Minor; hence this list is the natural way of describing that area. It does not include some of the smaller districts of Asia Minor, but it may not have been thought necessary to make the list exhaustive. Cilicia was, perhaps, rather grouped with Syria, as in Acts xv. 23, 41; Gal. i. 21. Thus the letter is addressed to churches dispersed over an area from twice to four times as large as that of the British Isles, including some of the wealthiest and most cultured cities of the empire; inhabited by many different races, among whom Greeks and Greek-speaking Jews were the most important. Most of the churches in Asia Minor had been founded either by Paul himself, or by his converts; and in many districts Christianity grew rapidly and flourished exceedingly. Cf. map.

2. according to the foreknowledge, &c., qualifies 'elect': cf.

of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto

Rom. viii. 28, 29, 'Called according to his purpose. For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained.' This parallel passage shews that what is meant is not foreknowledge of character which led God to choose some men rather than others, but God's comprehensive foreknowledge of His own plans and working, so that foreknowledge is practically equivalent to His deliberate and far-seeing purpose. So Sanday and Headlam, on Rom. viii. 29, point out that the word translated 'know,' and its Hebrew equivalent, are used in the O. and N. T. in the sense of 'take note of,' 'fix the regard upon.'

Father . . . Spirit . . . Jesus Christ. Note the separate reference to the three Persons of the Trinity. Cf. 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14, 'God chose you . . . unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit . . . to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.' None of Paul's salutations, however, introduce the Spirit; they simply couple the Father and Christ.

sanctification (*hagiasmos*). Only elsewhere in the N. T. in the Pauline Epistles (eight times) and in Hebrews (once), properly 'the setting apart for the service of God, consecrating, hallowing'; the cognate verb is used in the clause, 'Hallowed be thy name.' The reference is perhaps to Baptism, which was often accompanied by the gift of the Spirit, and constituted a formal consecration to Christian life. The word naturally came to mean the process, and, perhaps, even the resultant state of moral reformation. This was, of course, associated with consecration to God, but is referred to here rather in the following clause than in this. Cf. also preceding note. An alternative rendering is, 'In the sanctification of the (believer's) spirit'; but this is improbable.

unto obedience[1]. Only elsewhere in the N. T. in verses 14 and 22, and in the Pauline Epistles (Romans, seven times; 2 Corinthians, three times; Philemon, once), and Hebrews (once), in such phrases as 'obedience to Christ,' 'to the truth,' 'to the faith,' and absolutely. Here it may be used absolutely, without any grammatical connexion with Jesus Christ 'unto obedience, and unto sprinkling,' &c. In any case the obedience is rendered by the believer to Christ. It seems likely, however, that, in spite of difficulties in the grammar of the Greek, the author, not being specially concerned about grammar, intended 'Jesus Christ' to refer to both 'obedience' and 'sprinkling.' 'Obedience' would be the subjection of the believer's will and of his whole life to Christ, and would effectually guard against the idea that choice by the Father and consecration by the Spirit obviated the necessity of moral conduct on his part.

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[1] ὑπακοή.

obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

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sprinkling. Only elsewhere in the N. T. in Heb. xii. 24, 'The blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel.' The sprinkling of the blood of the victim was part of the Levitical ritual for the various sacrifices[1], it is connected in Exod. xxiv. 7, 8, with the conclusion of the Mosaic covenant, thus, 'And he (Moses) took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words.' The combination of 'obedience' and 'sprinkling' suggests that Peter may have had this passage in his mind. In the O. T. the application of blood to the altar symbolized the Divine participation in the sacrifice; the sprinkling of other things and persons symbolized their association with the sacrifice and its effects, i. e. the realization or the restoration (atonement) of fellowship with God. The N. T. interpretation of the rite is found in Hebrews, the only book which deals with this special detail of sacrifice. In Heb. ix. 11–28 we are told that as in the sacrificial ritual the sprinkled blood cleansed persons and things, especially the tabernacle and its vessels, and inaugurated the old covenant, so the blood of Christ 'cleanses your conscience from dead works to serve the living God,' and inaugurates a new covenant, and cleanses the 'heavenly things,' of which the earthly sanctuary and its furniture are copies. Thus here the 'sprinkling' signifies the participation of the believer in the sacrifice of Christ, and in the salvation which it effects; cf. verse 18.

Grace to you and peace be multiplied. 2 Peter has the same formula used as the opening of a long sentence; Jude, 'Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied.' 'Multiplied' in the salutation is peculiar to these three Epistles. The corresponding Pauline formula is 'Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,' with slight variations, except that Colossians omits the last five words; 1 Thessalonians has simply 'Grace to you and peace'; and 1 and 2 Timothy have 'Grace, mercy, and peace from,' &c.; 2 John 3 has the same salutation as Timothy, amplified; James has 'Greeting'; 3 John has a special prayer; and the anonymous Epistles—Hebrews and 1 John—have no salutation at all. Cf. Rev. i. 4 and note on Jude 2. It has recently been pointed out that such greetings and expressions of personal interest similar to those opening and closing the N. T.

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[1] It was not confined to the sin-offering.

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again

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Epistles are found as regular formulæ in the correspondence in Pagan Egypt, both before and after Christ[1]. Hence the formulæ of the Epistles were probably epistolary commonplaces like 'With kind regards' and 'Yours truly,' but none the less written with entire sincerity. Cf. Dan. iv. 1.

i. 3-5. *Doxology.*

Blessed be God, who, as the Father of Christ, is the ultimate source of our regeneration; and, through his resurrection, guarantees our future blessedness; and, meanwhile, keeps us safely through the dangers of this present life.

3-12. These verses form one sentence, in which Peter follows chains of association, without much regard to logical sequence or literary form, in a thoroughly Pauline fashion; cf. such paragraphs as Eph. i. 3-14, with which this section has much in common. As, however, our passage deals with a wide range of topics, it is here divided into sections for the sake of clearness of exposition.

3. Blessed be, &c. The salutation is followed by a similar amplified doxology in 2 Corinthians and Ephesians, beginning in each case, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'; the corresponding paragraph in Colossians begins, 'We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' In the other Pauline Epistles the salutation is followed by expressions of personal interest in those addressed. Cf. Rev. i. 5 b-7. 'Blessed' = praised. Phrases of such frequent occurrence may have been liturgical formulæ used in the worship of the primitive churches. Cf. also Rom. xv. 6; 2 Cor. xi. 31. The phrase has been translated, 'God even the Father, &c.'; but 'God and Father' is the more natural rendering. In Eph. i. 17 we have the unambiguous phrase, 'The God of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Cf. also Mark xv. 34, 'My God, my God.' Such phrases do not imply dogmatic propositions as to the relation of the Persons of the Trinity, but arise naturally out of the practical conditions of Christ's life. In his human life he worshipped and served God, therefore 'his' God; and in Christian preaching the true God was the God whom he revealed and concerning whom he taught.

according to his great mercy. Cf. Eph. i. 7, 'According to the riches of his grace.' 'Mercy,' see on Jas. ii. 13.

begat us again[2]. In the N. T. only here and verse 23. The idea of the beginning of the Christian life as a 'new birth' is worked out in our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, John iii.

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[1] J. Rendel Harris, *Expositor*, Sept. 1898.

[2] *ἀναγεννᾶν.*

unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and 4
undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven

1–8, e.g. verse 3, 'Except a man be born anew[1], he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Cf. John i. 13; Jas. i. 18; 1 John iii. 9, which all speak of the redeemed life as originating in being 'born of God.' Titus iii. 5 speaks of the 'regeneration[2],' the new beginning or renewal of life, a term used in Matt. xix. 28 of the second coming. Gal. vi. 15 speaks of 'a new creature' or 'creation.'

a living hope. True life implies growth to maturity, and the power to use one's surroundings to aid this growth. The 'hope' into which the Christian is born helps to bring about the assured fulfilment to which it tends; 'We are saved by hope,' Rom. viii. 24.

by the resurrection. Historically, the Resurrection founded the Christian Church by finally establishing the faith of the disciples in their Master; and this event was the great fact to which the apostles appealed in proof of his Divine mission; thus Peter on the Day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 24–36, iii. 15; Paul at Athens, Acts xvii. 31; Rom. i. 4, 'declared to be the Son of God . . . by the resurrection of the dead,' &c. Moreover, the Resurrection was necessary to the continued life of Christ, and therefore to his redeeming work; Rom. v. 10, 'If . . . we were reconciled . . . through the death of his Son . . . much more shall we be saved by his life'; Phil. iii. 10, 'That I may know . . . the power of his resurrection.'

4. inheritance. See on Jas. ii. 5. The child of God is born into a Divine inheritance.

incorruptible, &c. These synonyms emphasize the idea that this inheritance, unlike all earthly wealth, maintains its perfection always unchanged, because it does not contain with itself any germs of decay.

incorruptible[3]. Only elsewhere in the N. T. in the Pauline Epistles (four times), of God, Rom. i. 23; 1 Tim. i. 17; of the Christian 'crown,' 1 Cor. ix. 25; of the believer after the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 52, and verse 23, and iii. 4.

undefiled: also Jas. i. 27.

that fadeth not away (*amarantos*). Only here in the N. T. A closely connected adjective, *amarantinos*, occurs in v. 4 (which see), and there only in the N. T. *Amarantos* occurs in Wisd. of Sol. vi. 12, 'Wisdom is radiant and fadeth not away.' It is also used as the name of a flower.

reserved[4]. In 2 Peter sinners, &c., are often spoken of as

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[1] *γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν*, R. V. marg., 'from above.'

[2] *παλινγενεσία.*

[3] *ἄφθαρτος.*

[4] *τηρεῖν.*

5 for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last
6 time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold

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'reserved' for judgement, or vice versa, so Jude 13; and in Jude 1, believers are spoken of as 'reserved' or 'kept.'

in heaven: beyond the reach of earthly accidents. Writing to those who had suffered, and were likely further to suffer, persecution (verse 6) Peter is constantly suggesting the powerlessness of persecution to touch the real interests of Christians.

5. guarded: a military metaphor; cf. 2 Kings vi. 17, 'The mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.' As has been said, 'The inheritance is preserved for the believers, and the believers for the inheritance.'

through faith: trusting itself to the protecting power of God.

a salvation ready: not something to be provided hereafter, or in course of preparation, and therefore liable never to be realized, but an accomplished fact, ready and waiting to be manifested at the right moment.

in the last time: according to N.T. phraseology not a remote future; but the period upon which they had already entered; cf. verse 20. Such passages must be read in the light of 2 Pet. iii. 8, which was written with special reference to the difficulty which they raise. See also on next verse.

i. 6-9. *The preciousness of salvation.*

The assurance of salvation a source of joy, even in sore trial, and an incentive to perseverance under persecution, and to enduring and victorious faith in the unseen Christ.

6. Wherein: not in 'the last time,' which would give a sense very difficult to combine with the context; but in view of the considerations stated in verses 3-5, 'wherefore.'

ye . . . rejoice . . . ye have been put to grief. The difference of tenses, in which the R.V. follows the Greek literally, suggests that for the moment the actual experience of suffering was in abeyance. It is, however, possible, consistently with Greek idiom, to translate as A.V., 'Ye greatly rejoice . . . though ye are in heaviness.' Cf. 2 Cor. vi. 10, 'As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing.' The practical difference is not great, as, in any case, the readers' lives would be darkened by the shadow of recent suffering and the prospect of its speedy renewal.

for a little while: or, 'in a small degree.'

if need be: rather favours A.V. translation.

manifold temptations. The same phrase occurs in Jas. i. 2

temptations, that the proof of your faith, *being* more 7
precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by
fire, might be found unto praise and glory and honour
at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen 8
ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet
believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full
of glory: receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salva- 9

(which see). The R.V. marg., 'trials,' is the better rendering, the force of the word here being 'troubles which try the patience, faith, and constancy of believers.'

7. **the proof of your faith:** or, 'that which is proved, genuine, in your faith.' The same phrase occurs in Jas. i. 3 (which see).

being **more precious,** &c. In the original this clause, as far as grammatical construction is concerned, refers to 'proof,' not to 'faith.' The comparison is really between 'faith' and 'gold,' and between the suffering which tests faith and the fire which tries gold; but the construction adopted suggests not only the sterling character of the believers' faith, but also that the suffering is precious, because it demonstrates that character is 'precious.' So R.V.; the alternative rendering given above is perfectly simple, and is to be preferred. (Deissmann.)

might be found unto. The issue of the proof would be that the believer would receive praise, &c.

at the revelation: which would end their trials.

8. **whom not having seen.** We need not press this phrase so as to make it mean that no single person in the churches addressed had ever seen Christ; its use would be justified if it applied, as it certainly must have done, to the great majority of its readers.

though now ye see him not, yet believing. They had long been expecting the vision of Christ at his second coming; they had not yet seen him thus, yet their faith stood the strain. Cf. John xx. 29, 'Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.'

full of glory. Their joy was inspired by, and in a measure already radiant with, the glory in which their trials were finally to issue. Such joy was not tainted with anything selfish, corrupt, or unworthy.

9. **receiving the end,** &c.: rather, 'acquiring,' 'getting possession of.' As their faith survived one trial after another, they would feel more and more that the safety of their souls, the end and aim of their faith, became not merely a future hope but a present possession.

10 tion of *your* souls. Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied
11 of the grace that *should come* unto you: searching what *time* or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand

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your faith. The Vatican MS. and some other ancient authorities omit 'your,' but it should probably be retained.

the salvation of your **souls**: *lit.* 'the salvation of souls,' but the reference is clearly to the readers' own souls; there is no reference, either in the immediate context, or in the Epistle generally, to evangelistic work. Cf. 5^{b}.

With verses 6-9 cf. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18, 'Our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

i. 10-12. *Salvation a mystery to prophets and angels.*

The Christian salvation was made known to the prophets, as destined not for themselves, but for a future generation. Its time and circumstances were hidden alike from them and from the angels, in spite of the profound interest which both felt in the matter.

10. the prophets: *lit.* 'prophets,' even inspired men.

sought and searched: two synonyms used to express a single idea, in order to set forth a prolonged, diligent, often renewed search. This statement is made on Peter's own authority, and is a natural deduction from evident facts; it is not in human nature to be indifferent to the time when such predictions will be fulfilled. The O.T. nowhere describes this search, though there are passages which illustrate and partly justify the statement. In Isa. vi. 11 the prophet asks how long the Jews will be deaf to his preaching.

prophesied of the grace, &c. All the O.T. predictions of deliverance, glory, and prosperity for Israel are appropriated by the N.T. as setting forth the salvation and blessedness of believers. The church is the true Israel of God, Gal. vi. 16. Cf. on verse 12.

11. what manner of time. The conditions and circumstances under which the Christ would appear.

the spirit of Christ which was in them. The writers of the N.T. identify the Spirit of Christ, by whom they were consecrated to God, with the Spirit of Jehovah, who inspired the prophets.

the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto them- 12

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the sufferings of Christ. In such passages as Isa. liii, applied to Christ in Matt. viii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 22–24.

the glories that should follow them: e. g. the close of Isa. liii, and Isa. ix. 6, 7, 'Unto us a child is born,' &c.; xi. 1, 'There shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse,' &c., and many similar passages.

12. To whom it was revealed, &c. The connexion of this clause with verses 10, 11 has been understood in two ways, neither of which is quite satisfactory—

(1) The revelation is the answer to the searching of the prophets. Their own searching led to nothing (cf. 2 Pet. i. 21 and note), but God graciously gave a very limited answer to their questions.

(2) The verse is parenthetical, and describes the conditions of their futile search. So much they knew by revelation that their predictions applied to a future generation; they were anxious to find out just when this generation would arise; but, so it would be implied, they failed.

The former view gives the simpler explanation, and has been pretty generally adopted.

not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things. In announcing the coming of the Messiah and the blessings he was to bestow, they were rendering no service to themselves, because these predictions were not fulfilled in their days; but they were ministering to those who lived at the time of, and after, the Incarnation, because the prophetic writings helped men who saw and heard of Christ to understand his message and believe in him.

This clause, again, does not rest on any express statement of the O.T. Experience, at any rate, must have taught the authors of the various Messianic passages that their hopes would not be realized in their own days, but by some future generation; and this may be all that is meant by our passage. Daniel, indeed, speaks of a Day of Judgement some time after, apparently soon after, the fall of Antiochus Epiphanes; but this is not a very definite intimation that Christ would come about 160 years later. Possibly our Epistle makes some use of Daniel (see on verse 23); and in Daniel it is clearly intimated that the revelations made to Daniel do not concern his own time, but a distant future. Still it is difficult to suppose that Peter has Daniel in his mind. It is not a serious objection that Dan. xii. 13 seems to imply that Daniel would, through a resurrection, share in the Messianic glories. Peter might have overlooked the passage, which, moreover, is very obscure. But there is nothing in Daniel to suggest that the prophet 'searched and sought diligently' as to times and seasons;

selves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Ghost sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.

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they are very freely made known to him. Again, there is no evidence in 1 Peter, or the rest of the N.T., that the apostles and their companions used the symbolic chronological data of Daniel to prove that Christ appeared at the foreordained Messianic epoch. Again, the revelation is said to have been made to the prophets generally. Some, indeed, have understood the passage to mean that the date of the Incarnation was made known to the prophets, and attempts have often been made to extract a suitable date from Daniel by impossible interpretations of its symbolic numbers. But it is more consistent with the context to understand Peter to mean that while the prophets knew that the Messianic era lay in the future, they did not know the actual date; just as our Lord said of his second coming, 'of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father' (Mark xiii. 32).

unto you: A.V., 'us,' following inferior MSS.

these things: the announcements of the sufferings and glories of Christ.

now . . . announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Ghost sent forth from heaven. This clause involves a claim that the events connected with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and with the foundation of the church are the sufferings and glories of the Messiah announced by the prophets. The previous verse implied that the prophets were inspired by the spirit of Christ; this verse by the phrase 'Holy Spirit' implies that the preachers of the Gospel were inspired by the same spirit as, and therefore equally with, the prophets. The allusive references shew that these truths, like many others touched upon in this paragraph, were taken for granted alike by the Apostle and his readers.

which things angels desire to look into. For 'look into' see on Jas. i. 25. It is not expressly stated that this desire is not gratified, but the context implies this (cf. below); at the same time, one would naturally expect that it will be gratified hereafter. Thus in Eph. iii. 10, 'To the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God.' A superiority of Christians to angels is stated in 1 Cor. vi. 3, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?'

Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober 13

Here again no authority seems to be known for Peter's statement; yet it is made in a casual fashion, as if the idea would be familiar to his readers. The relations of the prophets and angels to the Christian revelation must have been familiar topics with preachers and teachers, as they are in the N. T.; and the ideas in this paragraph may have been commonplaces in religious writings and discourses.

Verses 10-12 effectively clinch the Apostle's appeal for constancy and cheerful endurance of trials. Salvation was worth waiting for, seeing it was the realization of the teaching of the prophets, and had awakened intense interest in prophets and angels. The Christians might be persecuted and despised, yet they were the 'heirs of all the ages'; for them inspired men had laboured through past centuries, and in their own days. For a while they had to suffer; they did not know how long their trials would last, or how long they might have to wait before they were delivered by the new revelation of Christ. Yet they might well 'take for an example of suffering and patience, the prophets who spake in the name of the Lord' (Jas. v. 10). The prophets had endured trials and persecution, and had not known when the day of deliverance would dawn. Christians looked for the second coming in their own day, whereas the prophets had no such hope; they knew that the Incarnation was reserved for a future generation. Christians might well bear patiently their uncertainty as to times and seasons, seeing that they shared this ignorance with angels (Mark xiii. 32), who knew even less of the gospel than the readers of the Epistle.

i. 13—ii. 10. General exhortation.

i. 13-16. *Be steadfast and consistent.*

Transition from the sketch of the position of the Christians to the practical application of what had been said or implied. Do not let delay and uncertainty be an excuse for falling back into sin, but resolutely concentrate your thoughts upon the assured manifestation of Christ, and imitate God's holiness.

13. Wherefore: in view of the glory and certainty of the Christian salvation, as set forth in the previous section.

girding up the loins: arranging long, flowing garments so as not to impede the wearer's movements, a necessary preparation for hard work; 'bracing oneself for an effort.'

mind. Cf. 2 Pet. iii. 1. The Christian hope can only be clearly understood and firmly held when the mind is released from the trammels of prejudice and sinful inclination and is able to act freely and vigorously. The Bible constantly requires that the intellect shall co-operate with the moral and spiritual faculties.

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and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
14 as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves

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be sober[1]: in the N. T. only in 1 Thessalonians (twice), 2 Timothy (iv. 5, 'Be sober in all things'), and 1 Pet. iv. 7, v. 8; 'refrain from undue excitement' (cf. iv. 7). Those who are steadfast under persecution may be excited to a bitter, restless, unbridled anger towards their persecutors. Alike trials, delay, and the glorious hope of deliverance might cause restless excitement. Another explanation is, 'refrain from immoderate self-indulgence' (cf. verse 14). But the word does not seem to be used in this way, either in this Epistle or in the rest of the N. T.

set your hope perfectly on the grace: mistranslated by the A.V., 'Hope to the end for the grace.' Another view connects 'perfectly' with the preceding word, 'Be perfectly sober.' The R.V., like the Greek, may mean either (1) 'Cherish a confident expectation that you will receive the grace,' &c.; or (2) 'Let the grace, &c., be, above all else, the assured ground of your hopes, i. e. the circumstance which encourages you to hope.' The former is simpler; but the latter is also quite consistent with the general tone of the Epistle, which treats the second coming, the revelation of Jesus Christ, as an assured fact, which renders deliverance from present trouble certain.

the grace that is to be brought unto you, &c.: *lit.* 'that is being brought.' As in verse 9, the Apostle regards the 'revelation' as almost beginning to take place as he writes. This is a natural thought in connexion with the grace which the 'revelation' bestows, i. e.—to generalize the idea—the reinforcement of the quality and energy of the spiritual life which springs from any new manifestation of Christ. In such matters the 'revelation' casts its shadow before it; confident expectation of such blessings is rewarded by an earnest of the grace which will spring from full realization.

14. children of obedience (cf. verse 2, and see on 2 Pet. ii. 14) does not equal 'obedient children,' but 'persons one of whose characteristic qualities is obedience.'

as . . . not fashioning, &c. Here, as elsewhere in the Epistle, the grammatical structure is a little careless and involved. R.V. represents the Greek perhaps somewhat too literally; the author's ideas would probably be better expressed by beginning a new sentence with verse 14, 'Be ye children . . . and do not fashion,' &c.

fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts.

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[1] *νήφειν.*

according to your former lusts in *the time of* your igno-
rance: but like as he which called you is holy, be ye 15
yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it 16

The reference is to external 'fashion,' giving to acts, habits, and conduct a form such as that in which the former craving for self-indulgence shaped itself; relapsing into old bad habits. 'To fashion oneself according to,' *suschematizesthai*, only occurs elsewhere in the N. T. in Rom. xii. 2, which has been rendered, 'Do not adopt the external and fleeting fashion of this world, but be ye transformed in your inmost nature.'

the time of **your ignorance**: before they became Christians. The phrase implies that Gentiles are addressed; their ignorance as to true morality gave them an excuse which lapsed Christians could not plead; but Jews were not ignorant as to morals. In Acts xvii. 30, Paul, speaking to the Athenians of their idolatry, said, 'The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked.' Possibly here, as in Eph. iv. 18, cf. also 22, there is a play upon the words 'mind[1]' (Eph., 'understanding') and 'ignorance[2]'; they are not, however, connected by derivation.

15. like as he which called you is holy: R.V. marg., 'like the Holy One which called you.' There is no practical difference; in either case the point of the clause is the duty of imitating the Divine holiness.

he which called you: i.e. God, as in Rom. viii. 30, 'Whom he foreordained, them he also called.' Cf. on 'elect' in verse 1.

holy[3]: the usual equivalent in the LXX of the Hebrew *qādōsh* (so, for instance, in the following quotation), the term used for things and persons withdrawn from common use, and consecrated to the service of Jehovah. Thus *qādōsh* meant 'belonging to God,' 'Divine,' and came to be used to describe Jehovah's nature as God. Hence it came to imply the moral character which God Himself possessed, and which should be imitated by persons consecrated to His service. Similarly, *hagios* in classical Greek meant 'devoted to the Gods and their service,' and came to mean 'pious, moral.' In the N. T. it often retains its original sense of 'set apart for the worship or service of God'; so, for instance, in Acts xxi. 28, the Temple is called the 'holy place,' and so, Jude 3, the members of the church are called the 'saints,' literally the holy; so too the Divine Spirit is called the Holy Spirit. But it naturally implies moral character, and this is often its chief sense, so here; cf. Jas. iii. 17.

manner of living[4]. The A.V. 'conversation' has exactly the same meaning, being used in its Elizabethan sense of 'behaviour,

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[1] *διάνοια.* [2] *ἄγνοια.* [3] *ἅγιος.* [4] *ἀναστροφή.*

17 is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on him as Father, who without respect of persons

conduct.' The clause means, 'In all the different concerns of life, at home, in business, in your pleasures, in social and political affairs, act as becomes the called of God.'

16. because: also used to introduce quotations in verse 24 and ii. 6.

it is written. Cf. Lev. xi. 44, xix. 2, xx. 7. The words quoted serve as a kind of text for large portions of Leviticus, where it is applied to a number of external details of conduct and worship.

Ye shall be holy. So the LXX; the original, in Leviticus, is 'Be ye holy,' so the A.V., following a text in which the scribe corrected the quotation to make it agree more closely with the Hebrew O.T.

i. 17–21. *The true life of the redeemed.*

Since you are sons of God, the Righteous Judge, let the awe of Him be upon you for the brief time of trial that yet remains; and remember that you have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, according to God's eternal purpose, realized in our days, and sealed by his Resurrection and glorification, for the establishing of your faith and hope.

17. if ye call on him as Father. It is implied that the hypothesis is correct, that they *did* call on God as Father. Therefore, since they claimed to be God's children, let them respect His authority. Cf. Jer. iii. 19, 'I (God) said, Ye shall call me My father; and shall not turn away from following me.' A.V., less accurately, has, 'if ye call on the Father.'

Father, who . . . judgeth. There is no antithesis between God's sovereignty and His fatherhood. The fatherhood includes the sovereignty and much more. In ancient times the authority of a father over his children was, if anything, more absolute than that of a sovereign over his subjects; the father could put his children to death or sell them for slaves. The obedience and deference due to a father and his 'judgements' would affect life much more constantly than those exacted by the state.

without respect of persons[1]. A word only found in this passage and in comments on it. The same idea is expressed in Peter's speech at the house of Cornelius the centurion (Acts x. 34), 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter-of-persons[2],' and in Rom. ii. 11, 'There is no respect-of-persons[3] with God,' with which Eph. vi. 9 and Col. iii. 25 are almost identical. In the ancient East, judges were often little influenced by the merits of the cases they tried, but decided in favour of the suitor who was the more influenjudgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear: knowing that ye were redeemed, 18

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[1] *ἀπροσωπολήμπτως.* [2] *προσωπολήμπτης.* [3] *προσωπολημψία.*

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tial, or offered the larger bribe. The absence of such respect-of-persons was one of the most striking differences between God and the ordinary human judge. Persecuted Christians might be overawed by the authority and pomp of those who ordered them to recant; being themselves often poor and obscure, or even slaves, they might think themselves excused for disloyalty to Christ by their own inferiority; but these differences of human station counted for nothing with God. Again, Christians of wealth and rank had to choose between these and loyalty to Christ; they are reminded that neither social nor church standing would shield them from the Divine displeasure (see below).

judgeth according to each man's work. Cf. Rom. ii. 5, 6, 'The righteous judgement of God; who will render to every man according to his works'; and 2 Cor. v. 10, 'We must all be made manifest before the judgement-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' The Apostle is not concerned here with the very difficult question of the relation of the Atonement to the sins into which true Christians constantly fall after their conversion. He is rather seeking to dissuade his readers from entirely abandoning Christian morality. Such a surrender would probably be accompanied or followed by open denial of Christ, and even if it were not, would be a fatal falling from grace. No Christian profession or outward status of church member or official would save such.

pass (*anastraphēte*): the verb corresponding to *anastrophē*; see verse 15. 'Let all the various activities which occupy your time be controlled,' &c.

sojourning[1]. Only elsewhere in the N. T., Acts xiii. 17, of the 'sojourning' of Israel in Egypt. The personal noun[2] is a synonym of the word for 'sojourner' in verse 1, which see. The period of trial would be brief, a mere 'sojourning,' short, perhaps literally, but at any rate in comparison to the future life.

in fear: an obvious sequel to 'judgeth,' but arising also out of 'Father.' Peter evidently believed that his readers were divided in their minds, conscious of some unfaithful inclination or desire. In such a case, the better side of their nature needed to be reinforced by a wholesome awe of the Father's displeasure. They had not the 'perfect love' which 'casteth out fear.'

Cf., on the whole verse, 2 Chron. xix. 7, in Jehoshaphat's address to his judges on the occasion of their appointment:

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[1] *παροικία* [2] *πάροικος*.

not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your
19 vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but
with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and

'Let the fear of Jehovah be upon you . . . for there is no iniquity with Jehovah our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.'

18. redeemed: *lit.* 'ransomed'; only elsewhere in the N.T., Luke xxiv. 21, 'We hoped that it was he which should redeem Israel,' and Titus ii. 14, 'Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.' In the LXX the word is used of Jehovah 'ransoming' Israel from their bondage in Egypt (Exod. vi. 6), and from other troubles. 'Ransom' is a favourite N. T. figure for the work of Christ; the point lies in the payment of a price, the unhappy state of the sinner, and the deliverance. We must not press the figure so far as to look for some one to whom the price is paid, e. g. according to mediæval theology, the devil.

not with corruptible things. Cf. verses 4 and 7; naturally, admission to the incorruptible inheritance is not purchased with a corruptible 'ransom.'

from your vain manner of life. The Apostle's object was to confirm his readers in the Christian 'manner of life'; hence he reminds them of what it cost Christ to ransom them from their previous unworthy condition. The ransom here is from the degradation of an evil life, and from the bondage of sin, as in Titus ii. 14. The figure is also used in the N. T. of deliverance from the guilt of sin, e. g. Rom. iii. 24, 'Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.' The one deliverance necessarily implies the other.

handed down from your fathers. A single word, only used here in the N. T. The 'vanity,' worthlessness, of their manner of life had been hereditary; in the case of Gentiles, polytheism, with its gross superstitions and low standard of morals; in the case of Jews, the reliance on external ceremonies and on Jewish birth rather than on a true spiritual relation to God expressing itself in a holy life. In either case the sin and guilt from which they were ransomed attached themselves to a mode of life sanctioned by conventional religion and morality.

19. as of a lamb, &c. A familiar N. T. figure, derived from the ritual of the Passover (Exod. xii. 5). So John i. 29 (36), 'Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world'; Acts viii. 32 (A. V.), 'Like a lamb dumb before his shearer,' and the numerous references in Revelation (v. 6, &c.). Cf. Isa. lii. 3, liii. 6, 7. The figure sets forth Christ as the perfect sacrifice.

without spot, *even the blood* of Christ: who was fore- 20
known indeed before the foundation of the world, but
was manifested at the end of the times for your sake,
who through him are believers in God, which raised him 21
from the dead, and gave him glory; so that your faith
and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified 22

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20. **foreknown.** See on verse 2; the A.V. 'foreordained' fairly expresses the idea.

before the foundation of the world. Cf. Eph. i. 4, 'Christ: even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.' A ransom which thus formed part of God's eternal purpose could not be corruptible or transient either in itself or its results, but must be alike adequate and sure. So Christ is called in Rev. xiii. 8 (A.V.), 'The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'

manifested: in his Incarnation, Resurrection, and Glorification. Cf. the next verse, and Heb. ix. 26.

at the end of the times: i. e. in the Christian era, regarded as the final period in the religious history of man (cf. on verse 5). The A. V. 'these last times' translates an inferior reading.

21. **believers.** The word *pistos* translated 'believer' is used in the N. T. in two senses: (1) 'believer' or 'believing,' e. g. John xx. 27, 'Be not faithless (*apistos*), but believing (*pistos*).' It is generally taken in this sense here. The readers of the Epistle had been led to believe in God through what they had heard of Christ, and through their experience of his salvation. If this is the true interpretation, Peter must have chiefly had Gentile converts in his mind, because their conversion to Christianity also led them to believe in the true God. (2) *Pistos* also means 'faithful,' as in iv. 19, 'a faithful Creator.' It was through the grace of Christ that they were loyal to God.

An alternative reading, *pisteuontas*, supported by some good authorities, could only mean 'believers.'

which raised him from the dead. Elsewhere in the N. T. only in the Epistles of Paul, with whom it is a favourite phrase, used as an epithet with or of 'God' (cf. Rom. viii. 11, &c.).

gave him glory. 'To render praise or homage to God' is a common Biblical sense of 'to give glory.' Here it may refer to God's expression of approval towards Christ, 'honoured him.' The evidence of such honour would lie in his exaltation to 'the right hand of the Majesty on high' (Heb. i. 3); cf. Acts vii. 55, where Stephen sees 'the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.' Or this exaltation may be the 'glory' which is given.

might be: or perhaps 'are.' One object or result of God's dealings was to stimulate faith and hope.

your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart

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i. 22–ii. 3. *Brotherly love in the new life.*

First application to a particular duty: the new birth to an eternal life, a reason for mutual goodwill.

22. purified. See also on Jas. iii. 17, iv. 8, a technical term for avoiding or removing ceremonial uncleanness. This process might be termed 'sanctifying' in view of its consecrating persons and things to God, or 'purifying' in view of its separating them from common objects. Here, as applied to the soul, it extends beyond mere external separation from heathen worship and habits to the abandonment of false principles and beliefs, and evil desires and passions.

in your obedience to the truth. 'The truth' is not so much the definite rules laid down by Christ and his apostles as a comprehensive term embracing all the means by which the will of Christ is made known—his teaching and example, the influence of his character and work, and of his Spirit. Cf. John xiv. 6, 'I am . . . the truth.' Submission to such an authority would involve complete separation from all that was unworthy in their former life.

A. V., following inferior MSS., adds 'through the Spirit' after 'truth.'

love of the brethren[1]: in classical Greek, of the mutual affection of actual brothers and sisters; so Ptolemy II and his sister both received the title Philadelphus, on account of their devotion to one another. The various cities named Philadelphia were so called because built by kings styled Philadelphus, or in honour of a brother or sister. The idea of the Divine Fatherhood (verse 17) implied human brotherhood. Hence *philadelphia* is used for the mutual affection between Christians by Paul (Rom. xii. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 9); in Heb. xiii. 1; here, cf. iii. 8, and in 2 Pet. i. 7.

love one another. Cf. ii. 1. One is a little surprised to find the Apostle putting this first, and emphasizing it. As he was writing to Christian churches suffering persecution, it might have been supposed that mutual goodwill could have been taken for granted. Evidently one cause of his anxiety was the ill-will of Christians to one another, which might go so far as to lead some to betray their brethren, and induce others to return to heathen life in order to spite Christians against whom they had grudges. In our own days men sometimes leave one church for another from similar motives. Mutual affection, on the other

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[1] φιλαδελφία.

fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible 23
seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God,
which liveth and abideth. For, 24

All flesh is as grass,
And all the glory thereof as the flower of grass.
The grass withereth, and the flower falleth:
But the word of the Lord abideth for ever. 25

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hand, would comfort the Christians in their trouble, and strengthen them to endure persecution. Such affection should naturally spring out of the common faith, experience, and hope; but men often grudge the self-denial and self-sacrifice which 'unfeigned love of the brethren' demands (cf. iv. 8).

from the heart fervently: after the fashion of 'unfeigned' affection. A. V. inserts 'pure,' and translates 'with a pure heart,' following some ancient authorities. The epithet is out of place here, but might easily suggest itself to scribes, perhaps as a reminiscence of 2 Tim. ii. 22, where the phrase 'from a pure heart' occurs in a suitable context.

fervently: with the faculty of loving stretched to its full energy, and therefore earnest and constant.

23. begotten again. See on verse 3.

not of corruptible seed. Cf. verses 4 and 18. The Christian is redeemed from his old life by an incorruptible ransom; his new life springs from an incorruptible seed, and he is born into an incorruptible inheritance.

through the word (*logos*): explained in 25^b as 'the word (*rema*) of good tidings which was preached unto you.' Such preaching was the occasion of the new birth. In verse 3 we have 'who . . . begat us again unto a living hope through the resurrection'—a leading topic in the preaching of the gospel.

which liveth. Cf. Heb. iv. 12, 'The word of God is living,' &c.

abideth: suggested by 25^a. The contents of the preaching, the truths of the gospel, are living, that is, they subdue and constrain that with which they come in contact; and they abide, they are eternal. Cf. on 'living hope' in verse 3. The connexion of 'abideth,' and therefore of 'living,' with 'the word' seems established by 25^a.

R. V. marg., however, translates 'The word of God who liveth and abideth.' As the Apostle will still have in mind the idea of verse 3, that it is God who 'begat us again,' he might refer to His 'living and abiding' as a further proof of the incorruptibility of the new birth. As the Greek for 'God . . . abideth' only differs

And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you.

2 Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile,

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in case-endings from the phrase 'the living God and steadfast' in the Greek versions of Dan. vi. 26, the words here may be a reminiscence of Daniel; and, if so, R. V. marg. is correct.

The A. V., following inferior MSS., adds 'for ever' at the end of this verse. This is a copyist's addition suggested by the 'for ever' in 25^{a}, and perhaps also by the fact that in Daniel the phrase is followed by 'for ever.'

24, 25^{a}. This quotation is an almost exact reproduction of the LXX of Isa. xl. 6^{b}, 8, which, in its turn, is a sufficiently close and accurate rendering of the Hebrew. The only variation worth noticing is the substitution by Peter of 'the Lord' for the 'our God' of the Greek and Hebrew. In omitting verse 7 our Epistle probably follows the LXX, from which that verse has been accidentally dropped.

In Isaiah 'the word of the Lord' is the prophetic announcement of God's purposes and of their moral and spiritual demands, especially as regards the restoration of Israel.

The introductory 'for' translates the same Greek word as 'because' in verse 16, which see.

Instead of 'the glory thereof' (so the Hebrew), A. V. has 'the glory of man,' following inferior MSS., which have altered Peter's words to make them agree more closely with the LXX, the A.V. or current Bible of the Greek-speaking churches, as far as the O. T. was concerned. Cf. Jas. i. 10, 11.

25^{b}. this is the word. The O. T. prophecies had an application to the times of the prophets, but were not thereby exhausted; hence the N. T. applies such passages to Christ (cf. on verses 11, 12).

word (*rēma*): so in both places in this verse, is a single utterance; *logos*, translated 'word' in verse 23, is a much more comprehensive and suggestive term, sometimes a continuous discourse, sometimes the reason, sometimes, as in John i. 1, the manifestation of God and the agent of His operations. Thus this verse refers to the special message of the gospel, which the word of God, His revealing of truth, makes known to man. The agents of that revealing in the present instance were the preachers who evangelized the churches of Asia Minor.

the word of good tidings which was preached unto you: *lit.* 'the word which was *evangelized*, announced as good news, unto you'; A. V., 'which by the gospel is preached unto you,' has the wrong tense, and is obscure.

1. Putting away, &c. If love is to be unfeigned, it must be

and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as 2
newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is with-

allowed to get rid of the various vices which arise out of self-assertion and self-seeking, in the absence of affection for one's neighbours.

all: every kind of and every instance of, and so throughout the verse.

wickedness[1]: R.V. marg., 'malice'; see on Jas. i. 21, the inclination to injure one's neighbour.

guile[2]: the habit of getting the better of any one by deceit or trickery.

hypocrisies: Vatican MS., 'hypocrisy'; e.g putting the intended victim of wickedness and guile off his guard by a show of friendliness.

envies (*phthonous*). See on Jas. iv. 5.

evil speakings: slander, scandal, ill-natured gossip.

These vices, it is implied, are a survival of the old bad life, 'the body of this death' (Rom. vii. 24); their presence in the church does not reflect on Christianity, but shews that its members are only recovering slowly and partially from the disease of sin.

2. as newborn babes. Cf. i. 3, 23. Even apart from hampering survivals, the new life is still a small and feeble beginning; it needs to be disentangled from the self-absorption of the natural man, not only that the Christian may feel some affection towards his new brethren, but also that he may have an appetite for spiritual food, and desire to grow in grace. Of course a figure like this cannot be worked out in details.

newborn babes . . . milk. The same figure is used, with a difference, in 1 Cor. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12 f. In both these passages 'babes' and 'milk' are used almost in a bad sense; 'babes' for Christians who ought to have grown in grace, but have failed to do so; and 'milk' of the crude, imperfect teaching which is all that such Christians can receive. The contrast here is quite different between the old life and the new.

It has been argued from the use of the word 'newborn' that the Epistle must have been addressed to recent converts, and therefore not to the Pauline churches in Asia Minor, some of which had existed fifteen or twenty years[3] when 1 Peter was written, but to churches recently formed, perhaps from amongst the Jewish communities in Asia Minor. But in his use of the terms 'new birth,' 'begotten again,' &c., our author is not thinking of the recent date of the conversion of his readers, but of the complete change which it should have wrought in their life and character.

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[1] *κακία*. [2] *δόλος*.

[3] Supposing the Epistle written about A.D. 60–65.

3 out guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation; if

In churches which had only existed fifteen or twenty years, during which Christianity had been spreading rapidly, a large proportion of the members must have been recent converts. Even to men who had been Christians a dozen years or more, their religion would still seem a novelty in comparison with their former heathen faith in which they had been born, and grown up, and perhaps come to middle life, and which their ancestors had held for centuries[1].

long for the spiritual milk which is without guile: the *logikon*, 'spiritual'; R.V. marg., 'reasonable'; A.V., 'of the word' (*adolon*) 'which is without guile'; A.V., 'sincere,' milk; an obscure phrase, which cannot be rendered literally. *Logikon*, the adjective from *logos*, 'word' (see on i. 23); it describes the 'milk' as connected with the 'word,' i. e. as provided by the preaching of the gospel and the grace of Christ; an idea better expressed by the A.V. 'of the word' than by the R.V. 'spiritual' (see also on next verse). The R.V. marg. 'reasonable' is a common classical sense of *logikos*, rather, however, of persons than of things, connecting with the use of *logos* for reason. *Logikos* is so translated in R.V. text in Rom. xii. 1, 'your reasonable service,' the only other place in which the word is used in the N.T. 'Reasonable' here might mean 'suitable, natural,' like 'rational' in 'rational dress'; but the context clearly requires us to connect *logikos* with the 'word' of i. 3.

which is without guile: referring back to the 'guile' of verse 1. The life of Christ in the believer fights against the desire to deceive and take unfair advantage of one's neighbours. Probably the simple, pure, wholesome character of milk suggested the epithet 'without guile.' Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 256, quotes an authority for taking *adolon* in the concrete sense of 'unadulterated.'

may grow . . . unto salvation. Growth needed continual nourishment. 'Salvation[2],' originally deliverance from physical danger, or a state of safety, is commonly used in the N.T. of the deliverance wrought by Christ. It is not thought of as something accomplished at the time of conversion, but as the mature state, into which the new life will ultimately grow, or as a gift to be bestowed when maturity is attained (i. 5); cf. Rom. xiii. 11, 'Now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed'; Phil. ii. 12, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling'; and, for the general idea of growth, Eph. iv. 11–15, '. . . unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness

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[1] Cf. Introduction, pp. 44 f.

[2] σωτηρία.

ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: unto whom 4
coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with

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of Christ: that we may be no longer children . . . but . . . may grow up in all things into him.'

'Unto salvation' was omitted by A. V., following inferior MSS.

3. Adapted with very slight changes from the LXX, which closely follows the Hebrew of Ps. xxxiv. 8, 'Taste and see that Jehovah is good.' The LXX, as usual, substitutes 'Lord' for Jehovah.

if: here = 'since, seeing that.'

tasted: in the various experiences of conversion and the Christian life. If their faith was at all real, it included experiences of grace which must make them long for more.

the Lord. As this is the immediate sequel to verse 2, and the figure of food is continued, the 'milk' may be identified with 'the Lord'; cf. John vi. 48, 'I am the bread of life'; 53, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves'; and the words of institution of the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. xi. 23-29, &c. But cf. below.

gracious[1]. In the Psalm the term refers to what may be tasted and seen, and does not, therefore, describe a quality peculiar to food, but applies to Jehovah as the giver of blessings, whose goodness is known by tasting and seeing His gifts. So here also, according to the 'gracious' of the English Versions, a meaning it often has in the N.T. But both in the N.T. and the LXX, *chrestos* is used of food, in a sense also common in classical Greek, viz. 'palatable, wholesome, nourishing'—of figs in Jer. xxiv. 2, &c., of wine in Luke v. 39. Cf. also Matt. xi. 30, 'My yoke is *chrestos*,' E. V. 'easy.' Moreover, the 'and see' of the Psalm may be ignored in order to continue the figure of food consistently to the end. Hence the Vulgate translates 'how sweet the Lord is,' and this view is taken by many modern scholars.

ii. 4, 5. *Christ the corner stone.*

The true life unites us with Christ as the stones of a building with a corner stone, and makes us priests to God.

4. unto whom. In commencing a new subject, where most writers would begin a fresh sentence, Peter constantly connects with the previous clause by a relative (cf. i. 8, 10, &c.).

4-5. a living stone . . . living stones. The figure changes to the coming together of stones to a corner stone to form a building, a N.T. figure for the close and permanent union of Christians with their Master and with one another; such union can only

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[1] *χρηστός.*

5 God elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up

exist as the result of the mutual affection on which the Apostle is insisting. The stones of a building cannot be rightly united with and adjusted to the corner stone if they do not also fit into and support each other. Cf. Eph. ii. 20, 21, 'Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord.' The figure is similarly used in 1 Cor. iii. 17, vi. 19; Heb. iii. 6.

Verses 4 and 5 are based partly upon the passage quoted in verse 6, and partly on Ps. cxviii. 22, 'The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner.' The 'stone' in the Psalm is sometimes understood as the family of the Maccabees, which rose from obscurity to be a dynasty of high priests and kings, but is more probably to be taken as Israel. Whatever was the original reference of the verse, it was a still more appropriate description of the rejection and exaltation of Christ (cf. on verse 7).

The introduction of the epithet 'living' mingles the reality described with the figure under which it is set forth, probably to remove the impression of coldness, rigidity, and lifelessness which would have been conveyed by 'stone' without any qualification.

4. elect, precious. See on verse 6.

5. spiritual. A favourite word with Paul, but only elsewhere in the N. T. in this verse.

house. The word is also used for household (cf. Heb. iii. 4-6); as these verses are partly literal and partly figurative, Peter may have this meaning also in his mind. The 'spiritual house' is the church as the sphere of the spiritual life, the home of the spirits of the faithful, governed by the Holy Spirit.

to be a holy priesthood. Connecting better with a household than with a house; in either case, if this rendering is correct, there is a mixture of metaphors; true believers are at once temple and priesthood. Cf. John x. 9, 11, where our Lord speaks of himself, almost in the same breath, as both the door of the fold and the shepherd. The facts of the spiritual life are so marvellous and manifold that they overtax the ordinary resources of language. The mixture of metaphor remains if the alternative rendering, 'for a holy priesthood,' of R. V. marg., is adopted; the priesthood is still the general body of believers (cf. verse 9).

An inferior text, followed by A. V., has the simpler reading, 'an holy priesthood,' doubtless a correction for the sake of simplicity.

to offer up spiritual sacrifices. The function of the Israelite priests was to maintain fellowship with God by means spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is contained in scripture, 6

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of sacrifices; they offered material sacrifices, but Christians in a spiritual temple present spiritual offerings—offerings which actually belong to the spiritual life—foremost among them being that 'unfeigned love' of which Peter has been speaking. The N. T. sets forth Christ as the one great sacrifice (Eph. v. 2; Heb. ix. 26, x. 12, 26); but the faith, thanksgiving, and consistent lives of Christians are also spoken of as sacrifices (Phil. ii. 17, iv. 18; see also next note).

acceptable to God. So Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you . . . to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable[1] to God'; Phil. iv. 18, 'having received . . . the things that come from you . . . a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God'; Heb. xiii. 16, 'to do good and to bestow alms, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well-pleased.' The same idea is also found in the O. T., e. g. Ps. li. 17, 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit': cf. also 1 Sam. xv. 22, 'To obey is better than sacrifice'; and Hos. vi. 6, 'I desired kindness and not sacrifice.'

through Jesus Christ. Cf. Heb. xiii. 15, 'Through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God.' As nourished by the life of Christ, bound up with him, and therefore with one another, like the stones of a building with its corner-stone, we are able to make acceptable offerings.

ii. 6–8. *The stone of stumbling.*

Confirmation from the O. T. of the teaching as to the blessed future in store for believers, and the doom of unbelievers.

6. Because. Cf. i. 16, 24. The following quotation does not arise very naturally out of the sense of the context, the main connexion seems to be verbal; the use of the phrase 'elect, precious' in verse 4 led the Apostle to quote the passage from which it was taken.

it is contained in scripture (R. V. marg., 'in a scripture'): a phrase only found here in the N. T. For 'scripture' see Jas. ii. 8.

The quotation is taken from Isa. xxviii. 16, where the believer is encouraged to trust to the sure foundation-stone, laid by Jehovah in Zion, rather than to arms and diplomacy. This foundation-stone is commonly explained as 'Jehovah's relation to Israel.'

The quotation follows the LXX with some small changes and omissions. The LXX and Peter differ from the Hebrew by

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[1] 'Acceptable' in 1 Peter translates a different word from that so rendered in Romans and Philippians.'

Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious:

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reading 'a stone elect' instead of 'a tried stone,' and 'shall not be put to shame' for 'shall not make haste.' Neither of these changes affect the suitability of the quotation. It would be equally apt in its original form or as given in the Epistle. Isa. xxviii. 16 is also quoted in Rom. ix. 33 thus, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence: and he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame'; cf. also Rom. x. 11, 'Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.' The phrase 'stone of stumbling and rock of offence' in Rom. ix. 33 is a reminiscence of Isa. viii. 14, and occurs in verse 8 of our chapter. The passages in 1 Peter and Romans are interesting examples of the freedom with which the authors of the N. T. used the language of the Old.

Probably Peter had Rom. ix. 33 before him, or in his mind, when he was writing this passage: because (1) this passage and Romans agree in some details of expression in which both differ from the LXX; (2) both combine with Isa. xxviii. 16 the phrase from Isa. viii. 14; (3) both agree in omitting certain phrases in the LXX.

It is true that where 1 Peter differs from Romans it agrees with the LXX; but Peter may have partially corrected his quotation from the LXX; or, being familiar with both the LXX and Romans, and writing from memory, he may have unconsciously combined the two.

An alternative view is that both 1 Peter and Romans are based on an edition of the LXX, differing from the one preserved in extant MSS. See also on Rom. ix. 33.

This quotation is applied to Christ because the 'stone' in the original is a symbol for the presence and Divine activity of Jehovah amongst His people, and Christ was the realization of that of which the stone was the symbol. An expositor in N. T. times would probably have said simply that 'the stone was the Messiah,' which is merely a popular statement of the same idea.

I lay: as a foundation.

a chief corner stone. In the N. T. only elsewhere Eph. ii. 20, quoted on verse 4. The exact meaning of the term in Isaiah is uncertain, 'corner stone' may be a mistranslation. The description suggests that by the 'stone' is meant a sure foundation. This may have been all Peter meant, 'chief corner stone' being reproduced from the LXX without any intention of emphasizing its exact meaning; perhaps it was not understood. It is doubtful whether the words translated 'chief corner stone' are a real Greek phrase; it may be a futile attempt to give a literal translation

And he that believeth on him shall not be put to
shame.

For you therefore which believe is the preciousness: but 7
for such as disbelieve,

The stone which the builders rejected,

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of the Hebrew, since it only occurs in the LXX, the Greek Testament, and writers commenting on either.

The corner stone is said, however, to have been important as binding together two walls, sometimes explained as Jews and Gentiles—an interesting application of the idea which might suit Ephesians, but is not suggested by the context here. The corner stones of Assyrian buildings are stated to have been specially large, conspicuous, and ornate.

elect: a misreading of the Hebrew, see above; applied to a stone it would mean 'choice'; it is used of Christ, Luke xxiii. 35.

precious[1] is used in the two senses of 'honoured' or 'honourable,' and 'valuable,' and would suggest both meanings to a Greek reader. 'Precious' is an unfortunate translation, because it suggests 'precious stones' or 'jewels,' and it is certainly not meant that the 'stone' was a jewel.

believeth on him: R. V. marg. 'it,' i. e. makes him the ground of faith, the reason for believing in God; rests faith on him as on a foundation.

7. For you . . . is the preciousness (*time*): R. V. marg., 'honour'; a term suggested by 'precious' (*entimos*), above. The stone is valuable because it is capable of rendering service, here serving as foundation or support to a building; hence our clause means, 'You are the people to whom the stone renders service, i. e. those to whom the work of Christ is a blessing.' The A. V., 'to you . . . he is precious,' fairly expresses the meaning.

R. V. marg. 'honour' is less suitable to the context, though adopted by many scholars; if adopted it would mean, 'You share the honour which Christ possesses.'

but for such as disbelieve, following Isa. viii. 14, xxviii. 16, contrasts the results of the preaching of the gospel on those who accept and those who reject. Cf. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16, 'For we are a sweet savour of Christ unto God, in them that are being saved, and in them that are perishing; to the one a savour from death unto death; to the other a savour from life unto life.' The gospel is very 'dangerous' doctrine. The A. V., following some ancient MSS., has 'unto them which be disobedient.'

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[1] ἔντιμος.

The same was made the head of the corner;
8 and,
A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence;
for they stumble at the word, being disobedient; where-
9 unto also they were appointed. But ye are an elect race,

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the stone, &c. Cf. on verse 4; the quotation is an exact reproduction of the LXX, which is intended for a literal translation of the Hebrew; see next note.

head of the corner. The sense of the Hebrew phrase in the Psalm is not quite certain; and the Greek, which is literally rendered by our versions, may not be an accurate translation. Peter apparently uses 'head of the corner' as equivalent to 'chief corner stone,' see on verse 6. This quotation is applied to our Lord by himself in Mark xii. 10 and parallels, and by Peter in Acts iv. 11. I have not found any evidence cited to shew that either 'chief corner stone' or 'head of the corner' were ever used as Greek phrases, otherwise than in quoting the LXX and N. T.

8. A stone of stumbling, &c. See also on verses 6, 7. The quotation reproduces the LXX's accurate rendering of the Hebrew. In the original (Isa. viii. 14) the 'stone' is Jehovah. The N. T. constantly applies to Christ what is said in the O. T. of Jehovah; this fact most strikingly illustrates the way in which its writers take for granted the deity of our Lord.

for they stumble at the word, being disobedient. Being possessed by the spirit of disobedience, and not even obeying the injunctions of the moral standard which they did recognize, Christian teaching only offended and repelled them. It is better, however, to follow R. V. marg., 'for they stumble,' i.e. at the stone, 'being disobedient to the word.' Instead of availing themselves of the blessings offered by the gospel, they refuse to submit to its influence, and so come into collision with the power and authority of Christ. At 'being disobedient' the language ceases to be figurative and becomes literal.

One might easily run up against a corner stone, the angle of two walls, or tumble over a partially exposed foundation.

whereunto: unto stumbling.

they were appointed. The figure has suggested that the stumbling naturally follows from unbelief; and the Apostle adds that such a consequence of unbelief and disobedience is 'also' part of the Divine purpose. Cf. Jude 4, 'They who were of old set forth unto this condemnation.'

ii. 9, 10. *The royal priesthood.*

The faithful, though once outside the kingdom of God, now, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for *God's* own

through His grace and to His greater glory, inherit the privileges of Israel as a nation of priests and kings, consecrated to God.

9. But ye. In these two verses, which, like the preceding, are mostly a mosaic of phrases from the O. T., the Apostle describes the character and destiny of the faithful in contrast to the doom of the disobedient. Material rewards are ignored, the special privileges of the believer are consecration to God and devotion to His service. The phrases here applied to the church are used in the O. T. of Israel: see on Jas. i. 1.

an elect race: LXX (following Hebrew) of Isa. xliii. 20; probably suggested by the 'elect stone,' and indicating the correspondence between the 'stone' and the 'house,' i.e. the church or 'race' of God's people; cf. also on i. 1.

a royal priesthood, a holy nation: LXX (following Hebrew) of Exod. xix. 6, where these distinctions are promised as the reward of obedience. The Hebrew original of the former clause is 'a kingdom of priests.' In Rev. i. 6, v. 10, Christians are styled 'a kingdom (and) priests.' Cf. Jas. ii. 5, 'Heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him.' A 'royal priesthood' would usually mean the priesthood of a royal temple, e. g. of Solomon's temple, and would be equivalent to our 'royal chaplains'; here, however, we must either (1) suppose 'royal priesthood' to mean 'priests who conduct the worship offered to Jehovah the Divine King'; or (2) 'priests of royal standing,' 'priests who are kings,' like the Maccabees. Either would suit the context; but (1) does the greater violence to the meaning of the words, and (2) is supported by the parallels quoted, and on both accounts to be preferred. Those whose wills are entirely at one with the will of God share His royal authority. For 'priests' see on verse 5; for 'holy' on i. 15. As the words for 'nation' (*ethnos*) and 'people' (in the next clause) (*laos*) are simply reproduced from the LXX, they may be considered equivalent synonyms, as the context requires.

a people for God's **own possession.** This is really the meaning of the A. V. 'a peculiar people,' where 'peculiar,' according to Elizabethan usage, has 'the sense of the Latin *peculiaris*, from *peculium*, a technical term denoting the private property which a child or slave was allowed by parent or master to possess[1].' The Greek here may be suggested by a similar phrase in Isa. xliii. 21, or by an equivalent phrase in Exod. xix. 5. These phrases occur four or five times in the O. T. of Israel, and here and in Titus ii. 14 (a phrase equivalent to, but not identical with that here) of the church.

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[1] Driver, on Deut. vii. 6.

possession, that ye may shew forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous
10 light: which in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

11 Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to

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shew forth, &c.: by the contrast between the holiness of their new life and the evil and selfish character of that from which they had been redeemed.

excellencies. See on 2 Pet. i. 3.

darkness . . . light: a contrast often insisted on in the Johannine books; see on 1 John i. 5–7.

10. which in time past were no people, &c. This verse is an application to the church of one of the leading ideas of Hos. i, ii (see especially i. 6–9, ii. 1, 23). Israel in its sin is to be called 'One that hath not obtained mercy,' and 'Not My people'; but there is to come a time of redemption when Israel shall be called 'One that has obtained mercy,' and 'My people.' The verse is not a quotation of Hos. ii. 23, but uses words drawn from different verses in Hos. i, ii. The description of Israel alienated from God is used of the unconverted, especially, no doubt, of Gentiles; after conversion the Christian inherits the blessings which Israel was to receive when reconciled to God.

Rom. ix. 25, 26, quotes Hos. ii. 23, i. 10, as a prediction of the calling of the Gentiles. The love that could and did reclaim those who had sinned, in spite of special privileges and enlightenment, would *a fortiori* redeem the Gentiles who had not enjoyed any such privileges.

ii. 11—iii. 12. Directions as to behaviour towards those who are not Christians.

ii. 11, 12. *Believers and unbelievers.*

General exhortation to pure life, and to honourable conduct towards those who are not Christians.

11, 12. These verses link ii. 11—iii. 12 with i. 13—ii. 10; verse 11 summarizes the latter, and verse 12 the former.

11. Beloved: introducing a main division of the letter as in iv. 12.

sojourners and pilgrims. 'Pilgrim' here translates the word rendered 'sojourner' in i. 1; 'sojourner' here corresponds to 'sojourning' in i. 17. The phrase is from the LXX of Gen. xxiii. 4, or Ps. xxxix. 12: cf. on i. 1, 17. The 'sojourner' (*paroikos*) is a person living in a foreign country where he has not the rights of a citizen, but is an 'Uitlander'; the 'pilgrim'

abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;
having your behaviour seemly among the Gentiles; that, 12
wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may
by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in
the day of visitation.

(*parepidemos*) is a person staying for a time in a place which is not his permanent home. If, as is implied here, the life of the foreign country is inferior to that of the 'sojourner's' native land, he must be careful not to adopt its immoral customs (11), but yet he must behave honourably and generously towards his hosts (12).

fleshly lusts: a general term for the inclinations to self-indulgence, self-seeking, and malice denounced in i. 13—ii. 10. 'Fleshly' (*sarkikos*) is used in its Pauline sense of what belongs to the selfish impulses of human nature apart from the influence of the Spirit.

which war against the soul. 'Soul' (*psuche*) here may be man's higher nature instinct with the new life bestowed by Christ; an idea expressed by Paul by 'spirit' (*pneuma*) or 'mind' (*nous*). The selfish impulses fight against the inclination to serve and love God. Cf. Rom. vii. 23, 'I see a law . . . in my members warring against the law of my mind'; and Jas. iv. 1, 'Your pleasures that war in your members.' But 'soul' may be used here in its ordinary meaning of the personal life, whose interests are assailed by evil impulses.

12. behaviour renders the word translated 'manner of living' in i. 15, which see, and also i. 17.

seemly[1]: 'honourable,' commending itself to men's moral judgement.

Gentiles: non-Christians as opposed to Christians: a natural adaptation of the Jewish use of the word for non-Jews.

they speak against you as evil-doers. The early Christians suffered from the reckless and malignant slander in which the carnal man indulges against those who differ from him in religion; such slanders as ignorant anti-Semites circulate as to Jews, and Chinese Boxers as to Christians. The members of the primitive church were constantly charged with being bad citizens, prone to sedition, and addicted to the systematic practice of immorality, incest, the murder of children for ritual purposes, and many other vices.

which they behold: the verb corresponding to 'eyewitness' in 2 Pet. i. 16. They might hear slanderous reports, but they

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[1] καλός.

13 Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's
14 sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto
governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers

would see for themselves the consistent lives of the Christians with whom they were acquainted, and would find it impossible to believe such reports.

glorify God: i.e. praise the God of the Christians, and, possibly, come to believe on Him.

in the day of visitation: another phrase used for the Day of Judgement or Second Coming, only here in the N.T. The phrase is from the LXX (following the Hebrew) of Isa. x. 3, where it denotes the day when Jehovah appears to right the oppressed and punish the oppressors. Cf. also 'time of visitation' (Luke xix. 44).

ii. 13-17. *Duty to authorities.*

Be loyal subjects of the emperor, obey his representatives, and shew due deference to all authorities. Christian freedom is not licence to set at naught human law. Orderly, law-abiding lives will silence slander.

13. ordinance[1]**:** *lit.* 'creation,' 'creature.' A literal rendering would not make sense, and the context requires some such translation as that given by our versions and adopted by most commentators. But no other instance is cited of this use of the word, and it is not a natural modification of its ordinary meaning.

for the Lord's sake. Entire consecration to Christ does not relieve us of the duty of obeying human authorities. These are God's instruments for promoting men's welfare. Therefore we should obey for his sake, in order to co-operate with his purposes; and also because loyalty commends his gospel to all good citizens. Peter is laying down a general rule, he is not thinking of the exceptional cases in which human ordinances conflict with the dictates of the conscience enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

the king: i.e. the Roman emperor, whose usual title in Greek was 'the king.' If the Epistle was written about A.D. 60-65, the reigning emperor was Nero (A.D. 54-68); his government of the provinces was fairly just and efficient. The districts to which the Epistle was addressed belonged to the Roman Empire.

14. governors . . . sent by him. As a matter of form, some governors were appointed by the Roman Senate, but these appointments were controlled by the emperor; and practically all the governors were his representatives.

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[1] *κτίσις.*

and for praise to them that do well. For so is the will 15
of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the
ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your 16
freedom for a cloke of wickedness, but as bondservants
of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. 17
Fear God. Honour the king.

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for vengeance, &c. This, of course, was only one of the ends which the emperor had in view; the Apostle confines himself to what was relevant to his subject.

Similar injunctions to obey the authorities as 'ordained of God' to do justice are given in Rom. xiii. 1; Titus iii. 1.

15. by well-doing. The Apostle takes for granted that the Christians will be found amongst 'those who do well,' which is a very effective way of admonishing them to live worthily.

put to silence: *lit.* 'muzzle.'

ignorance of foolish men. These are slanderers referred to in verse 12; their slanders were not deliberate lies, but, being ignorant and foolish, they were eager to believe the worst of those whom they disliked.

The mention of this 'putting to silence' in the same breath with the authorities, perhaps implies that they would vindicate the innocence of the Christians. Pilate publicly declared that Christ had done no wrong (Mark xv. 14); Gallio refused to listen to the charges which the Jews brought against Paul (Acts xviii. 12-16); and, on the occasion of his last visit to Jerusalem, the Roman authorities protected him from the violence of the Jews (Acts xxii, xxiii).

16. as free, &c., has been variously connected with verses 12, 15, and 17. In any case, it really qualifies the general ideas of the paragraph. The Christian is to obey authorities, not in any servile spirit, but as a free man, whose freedom consists in loyal service to God, and therefore includes obedience to those who are doing God's work.

not using your freedom for a cloke of wickedness: a caution against Antinomianism; see on 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19; Jude 3, 4. For 'wickedness' see on verse 1.

17. Honour all men: render to every one the marks of respect, deference, or courtesy which custom requires in the varied circumstances of life. This verse emphasizes the obligation to 'render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's' as well as 'to God the things that are God's,' by asserting the claims of all men and of the brethren, of God and the emperor, in the same breath. Cf. Prov. xxiv. 21.

Love the brotherhood: i.e. fellow Christians (i. 22, iii. 8, 18 Servants, *be* in subjection to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

iv. 8). The obligation of love to mankind in general is not explicitly stated in this Epistle, though it is in a measure implied in iii. 9. Here again the apostolic mind is not taken up with abstract principles, but with the practical needs of the situation. Relations with non-Christians would be mainly in external matters, business, &c.; hence stress is laid on the observance of the ordinary rules of conduct; there would be little opportunity for anything more. But within the church life was not to be a matter of rules, but of right feeling.

Fear God. Honour the king. 'Fear,' regard with awe and reverence, and therefore obey. Obviously, if claims to obedience conflicted, the fear due to God would override the honour due to the emperor.

Similarly Rom. xiii. 7, 'Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.'

ii. 18–20. *Slaves and their masters.*

Slaves must serve their masters faithfully, even when they are gratuitously ill-treated. Patient endurance of such wrongs meets with God's approval.

18. Servants (*oiketai*): not exactly equivalent to *douloi*, 'slaves,' but strictly 'members of the household,' including both slaves, and free men and women; and not properly used of slaves employed in factories, &c. The context shews that here the word means 'household' slaves.

be **in subjection**: a special application of verse 13.

masters[1]: strictly, 'masters of slaves,' and so used in the parallel passages (1 Tim. vi. 1, 2; Titus ii. 9). Cf. also Eph. vi. 5, 'Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters (*kurioi*), with fear and trembling,' and the parallel passage, Col. iii. 22. In Jude 4 (which see) used of Christ.

with all fear: in verse 17, &c., a duty owing to God. Here also 'fear' is not fear of punishment at the hands of the master, but the attitude of entire submission, of anxious and careful fidelity, which would result from the consciousness that God requires the faithful discharge of duties owed to man. 'All fear': obedience and deference required by all changing circumstances.

gentle[2]: 'reasonable,' 'considerate.'

froward[3]: *lit.* 'crooked,' 'rough,' hence 'not straightforward'; here 'cruel and unjust.' Cf. our 'angular,' 'not of an even temper.

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[1] δεσπόται. [2] ἐπιεικής. [3] σκολιός.

For this is acceptable, if for conscience toward God a 19
man endureth griefs, suffering wrongfully. For what 20
glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted *for it*, ye

Evil temper naturally tends to vent itself on the nearest and most helpless object.

19. acceptable[1]: i. e. 'before God'; A. V. has 'thankworthy,' apparently in the sense of 'acceptable,' which it uses to translate *charis* in verse 20. These renderings take *charis* in the sense of 'favour,' 'an occasion of gratitude or approval.'

The word has been taken in its ordinary N. T. sense of 'grace'; such conduct is a mark of grace.

for conscience toward God: through a conscientious sense of duty towards God. As the word rendered 'conscience[2]' sometimes means 'consciousness,' some translate 'through consciousness of God,' i. e. through a sense of duty to Him, and also through the inspiration and strength due to a consciousness of His presence.

griefs: the pain and distress caused by abuse, confinement in a slave-prison, beating, and other forms of torture. Greeks and Orientals treated their slaves, as a rule, more humanely than the Romans, but in the hands of a 'froward' master the slave's lot was deplorable anywhere. Slavery in the nineteenth century in Christian countries like the United States and Brazil was accompanied by the grossest cruelty.

20. what glory[3], &c. Patience under undeserved punishment would be exceptional and specially meritorious; Christians might take pride ('glory') in such conduct on the part of their brethren.

The parallel passages (Eph. vi. 5-9; Col. iii. 22—iv. 1) also admonish masters to treat their slaves well. The absence of such an admonition here, as in 1 Tim. vi. and Titus ii, may indicate that few of the Christians addressed owned slaves (cf. 1 Cor. i. 26, 'not many noble'), or may imply that the Apostle thought it unnecessary.

These and similar passages were used by Christian ministers and others in the Southern States of America as a scriptural justification of slavery. Obviously, however, the Apostle is not discussing the righteousness of slavery; he takes it for granted as a recognized institution, and advises slaves how to behave under existing conditions. For the admonition to endure wrong patiently, cf. Matt. v. 39, 'Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also,' and notes on that and similar passages. Here, however, we may note the Apostle speaks

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[1] χάρις. [2] συνείδησις.

[3] κλέος. Only here in the N. T.

shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with
21 God. For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should
22 follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile
23 found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but com-

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approvingly of the maintenance of order by magistrates (ii. 14). The slave, moreover, had no legal redress; and patience under wrongs for which there is no remedy is quite consistent with using a remedy when it exists.

acceptable. See on verse 19.

ii. 21-25. *Christ the example of patient endurance.* Christians are called to such patient endurance of undeserved ill-treatment, because they are called to follow in the footsteps of Christ, who was sinless and yet died a cruel death. He has a right to demand this sacrifice, because he suffered on account of our sins, and thus brought us back to God, when we were wandering away to destruction.

21. called. Both the example and teaching of Christ made it plain that such sufferings would be part of the Christian life; cf. Mark viii. 34, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me'; John xvi. 33, 'In the world ye have tribulation.' Cf. iii. 9.

22-25. These verses are an exposition of parts of Isa. liii, which is here applied to Christ, as in Matt. viii. 17; Mark xv. 28; Luke xxii. 37; John xii. 38; Acts viii. 32, 33; Rom. iv. 25, x. 16; Heb. ix. 28. What Isa. liii. referred to in the first instance is matter of controversy—whether Israel, or the righteous believers in Israel, or some teacher, prophet, or martyr; but it is generally recognized that the prophecy is fulfilled in Christ. Cf. iii. 18.

22. who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: taken, with very slight change from the LXX of Isa. liii. 9, as found in the Alexandrine MS.; which is a fairly close translation of the Hebrew.

23. who, when he was reviled, &c. This verse shews how the actual conduct of Christ corresponded to the description, 'there was no guile found in his mouth,' and is obviously intended to commend his behaviour in this respect as an example to the readers. This verse is specially illustrated by the incidents of the trial and Passion.

when he was reviled, &c. Cf. iii. 9.

committed himself: R. V. marg., 'his cause.'

mitted *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: who his 24
own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we,
having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by
whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were going astray 25
like sheep; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and
Bishop of your souls.

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him that judgeth righteously: God; reminding the readers that in their case also God would vindicate and reward innocence.

24. bare our sins: from the LXX of Isa. liii. 12, slightly modified through the influence of liii. 4: cf. also liii. 11. Isa. liii. 12 is also applied to Christ in Heb. ix. 28. R. V. marg., 'carried up our sins . . . to the tree.'

in his body. Cf. Col. i. 21, 22, 'You . . . hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death'; and the clause, 'This is my body' (1 Cor. xi. 24).

the tree: the cross—the death of a criminal slave. Christ had endured the worst that could happen to the slave, for whom the Apostle wrote this paragraph.

R. V. text (=A. V.) means that Christ in his Passion took upon himself our sins, i. e. their consequences, pain, death, and humiliation; and did this 'in his body,' i. e. as an act of the Incarnation, in his human life as representing mankind.

R. V. marg., 'carried up . . . to the tree,' would mean that Christ took our sins to the cross; and, by his death and suffering as a man, removed them and the guilt and penalty attaching to them. The phrase has also been interpreted 'offered up on the cross as on an altar,' but the cross can scarcely stand for an altar, or sins for a sacrifice.

that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness: i.e. the purpose of Christ's death (not necessarily the whole purpose) was the moral reformation of character and conduct. Peter's great object in this Epistle is to induce the professing Christians whom he addresses to live worthily of the gospel; and, to this end, he urges many different considerations in various ways.

24, 25. by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were going astray like sheep. From the LXX (following the Hebrew) of Isa. liii. 5, 6. Before they became Christians they were stray sheep.

now: since their conversion.

returned. The same verb is used in 1 Thess. i. 9 of the conversion of Gentiles, 'Ye turned unto God from idols.' 'Turned round to' gives the sense better. It does not mean that the readers had once been in true fellowship with God, 3 In like manner, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may

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had wandered away, and then at their conversion returned to Him; but that once they were wandering far off from God in a direction which led away from Him, and at their conversion they turned round, and began to move in a direction leading to Christ.

Shepherd and Bishop of your souls: Christ. 'Shepherd' is often used in the O. T. for the leaders of Israel; and sometimes for Jehovah (Pss. xxiii. 1, lxxx. 1). In the N.T. it is used of Christ (Mark xiv. 27); 'the good Shepherd' (John x. 11, 14; Heb. xiii. 20: and cf. 1 Pet. v. 4). 'Bishop' as a technical ecclesiastical term cannot be correct here for the Greek *episkopos*, but 'overseer' as R. V. marg. The word is only used of Christ here in the N.T.; it should be combined with 'Shepherd'—the Shepherd who takes charge of our souls. *Episkopos* is used of God in the LXX in Job xx. 29^b (where E.V., following the Hebrew, has 'God'), and in Wisd. of Sol. i. 6.

iii. 1–6. *Wives and husbands.*

Let wives obey their husbands, even if the husbands are not Christians; such behaviour may lead to their conversion. Let the wives be anxious to be conspicuous for a meek and quiet spirit rather than for jewels and dresses. Sarah and other holy women of the O. T. furnish an example of such conduct. Women who live holy lives and are not intimidated by the threat of persecution come to be Sarah's true daughters.

1. ye wives, be **in subjection:** another special application of ii. 13.

to your own husbands. Cf. verse 5; 1 Cor. vii. 2, &c. The 'own' is not needed, and is misleading; the Greek word *idios*, which 'own' translates, is inserted because without it the phrase might have been taken to mean 'be in subjection to men.' Peter, it will be remembered, was a married man.

even: omitted by the A.V. with the Vatican MS., &c., but found in most of the best MSS.

if any obey not the word: i. e. are not Christians (cf. ii. 8). Classical writers often speak of Greek and Roman women as given to embrace Judaism and other Eastern religions. Thus many women were converted to Christianity while their husbands remained pagan, and perhaps, in some instances, Jews. With the Greeks and Romans, as with the Jews, religious observances formed a considerable part of the routine of family life; so that the presence of Christians and non-Christians in the same family might be most embarrassing. A Christian could hardly live the ordinary domestic life of a heathen household without seeming to

without the word be gained by the behaviour of their
wives; beholding your chaste behaviour *coupled* with 2
fear. Whose *adorning* let it not be the outward adorning 3
of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of

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countenance idolatry. In a Jewish family the difficulty would be less; Jewish observances might be unnecessary, but they were not wrong.

without the word: *lit.* 'without word'; rather, 'without talking,' i.e. preaching or exhorting on the part of the wives; they were not to try to 'nag' their husbands into the church.

gained: won for Christ.

behaviour. See on i. 15.

Paul discusses the problem of a Christian married to a non-Christian in 1 Cor. vii. 10–16. Evidently the difficulties seemed to some Corinthians so great that they could only be solved by separation, while others held that, in the teeth of all difficulties, the Christian should insist on maintaining the marriage relationship, even when the non-Christian wished to separate. Paul decided against both parties. The Christian was to live with the non-Christian so long as the latter wished it, and no longer.

Neither apostle actually mentions the difficulty arising from the religious observances of a heathen household. In the case of a Christian wife it would be in some measure obviated by the comparatively secluded life of women and the existence of separate apartments for them.

History presents many striking examples of the conversion of heathen husbands through the influence of their Christian wives, e. g. Clovis, king of France, through his wife Clothilda; Ethelbert of Kent, through his wife Bertha.

On the other hand, Justin Martyr (*Second Apology*, ii) tells an interesting story of the troubles that befell the Christian wife of a heathen husband; but they arose from his drunkenness and immorality, not from his devotion to Paganism.

Obviously, the wife's 'subjection' would not involve any obligation to do wrong at her husband's bidding.

2. beholding. See on ii. 12.

chaste (*hagnos*): perhaps rather 'godly' (manner of life), such as is described in verses 3 and 4. Cf. on i. 22, and Jas. iii. 17.

fear. See on ii. 18.

3. not . . . the outward adorning, &c. This verse clearly does not forbid plaiting the hair or wearing jewels any more than putting on apparel; but in a genuine Christian woman any attractiveness derived from dress and ornaments will be trifling compared to the winsomeness of Christian character.

4 putting on apparel; but *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible *apparel* of a meek and quiet
5 spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who

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4. the hidden man of the heart. This is the adorning to be aimed at, in contrast to mere outward ornaments. 'Man' here = 'human being.' We might paraphrase, 'The real self, hidden in the heart and soul.' Cf. Rom. ii. 28, 29, 'For he is not a Jew, which is one in what is manifest; neither is that circumcision, which is in what is manifest in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one in what is hidden; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter'; also Paul's contrast between 'the inward man' and 'the outward man' (Rom. vii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 16).

incorruptible apparel, which will not wear out like dress and jewels, and is never out of fashion. Cf. i. 4, 7, 18, 22.

a meek and quiet spirit has been well explained as 'the spirit which neither worries other people nor allows itself to be worried'; a suitable spirit for a woman 'in subjection' (verse 1). 'Meek' (*praüs*), 'mild,' 'gentle,' used in the LXX for a word which came to be synonymous with 'faithful worshipper of Jehovah'; elsewhere in the N.T. only three times—twice of Christ (Matt. xi. 29, xxi. 5), and once in the Beatitude, 'Blessed are the meek' (Matt. v. 5). The corresponding quality, 'meekness,' is frequently commended by Paul. 'Quiet': see quotation from 1 Timothy below.

which is in the sight of God of great price. Dress could only appeal to men, character would commend them to God. But, as the Apostle is specially dealing with their relation to their husbands, he may also have in mind that showy dress is a bid for general admiration, while the graces of speech and conduct which spring from a 'meek and quiet spirit' would be most obvious in family life.

Similar advice to wives is given in Eph. v. 22–24; Col. iii. 18; Titus ii. 4, 5. The closest parallel is the advice to women generally in 1 Tim. ii. 8–12, 'I desire . . . that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or raiment of great price (cf. 1 Pet. iii. 3); but through good works. Let a woman learn in quietness (1 Pet. iii. 4) with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach (1 Pet. iii. 1^{b}), nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness.'

5. the holy women: scarcely, as often explained, the women of ancient Israel, 'holy' as belonging to the Chosen People; but probably the wives of the patriarchs and other notable women,

hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection
to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, call- 6
ing him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well,
and are not put in fear by any terror.

'holy' through the special relation of their husbands to God. In the next verse, Sarah's respectful mode of addressing Abraham is given as a proof of this statement. Speaking generally, however, the women of the O. T. do not seem remarkable for 'a meek and quiet spirit'; remember Sarah's dealings with Hagar, Rebecca's deception of Isaac, and the quarrels between Rachel and Leah. Nevertheless, as a matter of form, at any rate, they were 'in subjection to their husbands,' and so far legitimate examples for the women of the primitive church.

6. calling him lord: Gen. xviii. 12.

whose: Sarah's; the Greek word is feminine.

are: *lit.* 'became,' or, according to English idiom, 'are become' (so R.V. marg.), i. e. by becoming Christians; so Rom. iv. 9–25, e. g. 17, 18, 'Abraham . . . the father of us all (as it is written, A father of many nations have I made thee)'; Gal. iii. 28, 29, 'There can be neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one man in Jesus Christ. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed.' Sarah is taken as the type of godly women, as Abraham of godly men; and so, in every race, the Christian man is the spiritual son of Abraham, and the Christian woman the spiritual daughter of Sarah.

if ye do well: so far as you live consistent lives. This spiritual succession is not a mere matter of Christian profession, which may be as purely outward as jewels and dress.

R. V. margin makes this and the following clause qualify 'holy women' in verse 5, and places the reference to Sarah in brackets as a parenthesis, thus: 'the holy women . . . who hoped in God . . . being in subjection to their own husbands (as Sarah obeyed Abraham: whose children ye are become), doing well and not being afraid,' &c. Cf. next note.

are not put in fear by (R. V. marg., 'afraid with') **any terror.** A reference to Prov. iii. 25 (LXX, following Hebrew), addressed to the man who 'keeps sound wisdom and discretion' (21), thus: 'Be not put in fear by sudden terror,' &c. (26). For Jehovah shall be thy confidence.' 'Terror[1]' is properly the emotion of fear, as violent agitation, so that the clause would mean 'not allowing yourselves to be prostrated and distracted by fear.' Here it is sometimes taken to mean 'object of fear,' thus: 'Let no threats or dangers terrify you.' The sense in either

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[1] πτόησις. Only here in the N. T.

7 Ye husbands, in like manner, dwell with *your wives* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the

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case may be that a Christian woman is not to be frightened out of a godly life by the prospect of ill-treatment at the hands of her husband. The husband in Justin Martyr's story[1] denounced his wife to the authorities as a Christian, because she left him on account of his evil life. The reference, however, may be to the general danger of persecution.

According to R.V. margin this clause refers to the 'holy women' of ancient Israel. If so, it will mean that, living a godly life, they trusted in God, and their trust was justified by the Divine protection; e. g. the deliverances of Sarah and Rebecca in Egypt and at Gerar (Gen. xii, xx, xxvi), when they had got into difficulties through obeying their husbands.

iii. 7. *Husbands and wives.*

On the other hand, let husbands be reasonable and considerate towards their wives, in view of their needs as weak and dependent, and their claims as fellow Christians. Such conduct is a necessary condition of true fellowship with God.

7. Ye husbands. This verse is not another application of ii. 13, but an appendix to the previous paragraph, guarding against any abuse of its teaching.

in like manner: with the same loyal recognition of all just claims. The spirit which made the wife 'meek and quiet' would make the husband kind and attentive.

according to knowledge: the true spiritual enlightenment, which would be aware of the needs and claims of the wife, and would regard them as sacred obligations; see on 2 Pet. i. 2, 5.

honour. The wife, though 'in subjection,' had her dues; and 'Honour all men,' in ii. 17, directed that they should be recognized.

as unto the weaker vessel. 'Vessel' (*skeuos*) is sometimes used figuratively of the body as the instrument and vessel of the soul; and so, like our 'body,' might come to mean 'person'; and the phrase would simply mean 'the weaker of the two.' But here and in 1 Thess. iv. 4 'vessel' is commonly taken as meaning 'wife in relation to husband,' and vice versa. To the Christian, such weakness is a claim on his courtesy and kindness. Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 12–31, especially 24^b, 'God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honour to that part which lacked.'

Probably, however, we should translate, 'dwell with the woman as the weaker vessel according to knowledge, giving honour (to grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered.

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[1] See p. 223.

Finally, *be* ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as 8
brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: not rendering 9

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them) as being,' &c. In the Greek, 'giving honour' immediately precedes 'as being,' &c. The practical difference in the teaching is very slight.

joint-heirs of the grace of life. Husband and wife were fellow Christians, redeemed by the same ransom, living by the same grace, looking forward to the same inheritance, therefore the wife was obviously worthy of all honour. Some ancient MSS. read 'manifold grace of life'; in iv. 10 we have 'the manifold grace of God.' Apparently the case of a Christian married to a non-Christian wife is not considered; the latter would hardly be called an 'heir of the grace of life.'

your prayers: either the husbands', or the prayers of both husbands and wives.

hindered. The spirit which makes a man harsh and overbearing towards the weak would hinder his fellowship with God, and might disturb the wife's faith.

Similar admonitions to husbands are found in Eph. v. 25; Col. iii. 19.

iii. 8–12. *Recapitulation.*

Summary of ii. 11—iii. 12, concluding with an appropriate quotation from the O. T. Let the Christians be united by mutual affection; and when reviled and persecuted, let them not retaliate but return good for evil, that they may attain to their inheritance of blessing.

8. Finally: by way of conclusion and summary.

all. The previous paragraphs have dealt with special classes—slaves, wives, husbands; the summary addresses all these, and those of other classes as well.

likeminded: A. V., 'of one mind.' Only here in the N. T.

compassionate (*sumpatheis*): R. V. marg., '*Gr.* sympathetic'; A. V., 'having compassion one of another'; only here in the N. T. The corresponding verb is used in Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not a high priest that cannot be *touched-with-the-feeling-of*[1] our infirmities.' 'Compassionate' suggests that the person who feels compassion is in a superior position, and the Greek does not imply this, so that 'sympathetic' ('entering into each other's feelings,' 'feeling for and with one another') is better.

loving as brethren. See on i. 22.

humbleminded. A. V. has 'courteous, translating a reading

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[1] *συμπαθῆσαι.*

evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should
10 inherit a blessing. For,

meaning literally 'friendly-minded,' which is found in inferior MSS. Cf. v. 5.

9. not rendering evil for evil. So also Rom. xii. 17 (see below); 1 Thess. v. 15.

or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing. Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13, 'Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we intreat.' Cf. also Luke's version[1] of the Sermon on the Mount, vi. 27–38, especially 28, 'Bless them that curse you[2].'

Verses 8, 9ᵃ have many points of contact with Rom. xii. 9–21; thus 10, 'In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honour preferring one another.' 14, 'Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.' 15, 'Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.' 16, 'Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly.' 17, 'Render to no man evil for evil.'

The renewed injunction to 'love the brethren' (i. 22), and to mutual love generally, takes us back to a previous section, and further illustrates Peter's habit of knitting together the different divisions of his letter by cross-references.

In verse 8 the first three epithets, 'likeminded,' 'having fellow-feeling,' 'loving as brethren,' shew that here the Apostle has in mind the mutual relations of Christians. But he would, of course, have wished his readers to be 'tender-hearted,' &c., to non-Christians when opportunity arose.

9ᵇ. for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing. Cf. ii. 21 and note the twofold nature of the Christian calling—to unmerited persecution and to blessing. Our clause = 'You were called to inherit a blessing.'

'For' here implies the very striking thought that to bless and to be blessed are inseparably connected. The spirit which blesses even persecutors is a necessary condition of inheriting a blessing; and conversely the heirs of blessing are inevitably moved to bless, even those at whose hands they have suffered. Such 'blessing' would involve a desire for the salvation of its object, and the desire would lead to prayer and other practical efforts. Instead of 'for,' A. V., with inferior MSS., has 'knowing that.'

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[1] There is less similarity with Matthew's version.

[2] This clause is included in the A. V. of Matt. v. 44, following inferior MSS. It was not originally part of Matthew, but was introduced by some scribe from Luke.

He that would love life,
And see good days,
Let him refrain his tongue from evil,
And his lips that they speak no guile:
And let him turn away from evil, and do good; 11
Let him seek peace, and pursue it.
For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, 12
And his ears unto their supplication:
But the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil.

And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of 13

10–12. The quotation is from the LXX (following the Hebrew) of Ps. xxxiv. 12–16, with slight changes.

10, 11. Refraining from evil-speaking ('reviling') and turning away from evil (and therefore from 'rendering evil for evil') are here express conditions of obtaining life and seeing good days (inheriting a blessing).

11. Those who seek peace will be 'likeminded,' &c.

12. the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, &c., so that they may be sure that his promises will be kept; and, also, that when he lays down conditions, he will see that they are fulfilled.

iii. 13—iv. 11. Exposition of the blessedness of suffering for Christ.

iii. 13, 14ᵃ. *Blessedness of suffering for Christ.*

Statement of the subject. Under ordinary conditions the upright man remains unmolested; but persecution may arise, and if so it is blessed to suffer for righteousness' sake.

13. who is he that will harm you? Cf. LXX of Isa. l. 9, 'Behold the Lord will help me, who will harm me?' (Hebrew, as R.V., 'who is he that shall condemn me?') 'Harm[1]' in the N.T. only elsewhere in Acts (five times), of the oppression of the Israelities by the Egyptians (vii. 6, 19); of the persecution of the Christians by Herod (xii. 1).

As usual in this Epistle, the opening sentence of a new section springs immediately out of the close of the preceding. Seeing that the Lord has promised prosperity to the righteous (10, 11), and is always closely observing men (12), how can any evil happen to those who are set on doing right? The conclusion seems obvious and necessary, that no one can harm them; but

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[1] *κακοῦν*, 'cause evil to.'

14 that which is good? But and if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed *are ye*: and fear not their

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nevertheless seems also quite at variance with experience. This sentence is specially remarkable as addressed to those who had suffered (i. 6) and were likely to suffer persecution. It is commonly explained as equivalent to 14[a], and thus meaning that, though their persecutors might take away their property, and torture and put to death both them and their families, they could do them no real harm. Cf. Luke xii. 4, 'Be not afraid of them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.' Such teaching is included in 14[a], but is probably only one aspect of the truth which the Apostle meant to convey in verse 13. The general tone of the Epistle suggests that the Christians addressed were in great fear of persecution, but that the Apostle thought they overrated their danger, and in their terror forgot that there was a protecting Providence. Peter himself is much more anxious lest that should be a failure of Christian conduct. Verse 13 therefore means, 'Do not forget that God protects His people, and that, if you fall away into sin, you forfeit that protection. You may draw down ill-treatment upon yourselves by being abusive, over-reaching, and dishonest; but don't call it persecution.'

zealous: A. V., 'followers,' translating inferior MSS. whose reading is literally 'imitators.'

14[a]. But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake. The Greek idiom implies that it is not likely that they would suffer thus; not that it was wholly improbable that such cases would occur, but that to suffer persecution would be a rare experience.

blessed are ye: *lit.* 'happy are ye,' not merely in spite of, but even because of, persecution. Persecutors were not only powerless to injure the faithful, but their attempts to do so actually brought happiness to those whom they ill-treated. Cf. ii. 19, 20, iv. 14, and Matt. v. 11, 'Blessed are ye when men shall . . . persecute you.' The teaching of verses 13 and 14[a] may be paraphrased thus: 'No one shall harm you; God will prevent any suffering or loss which would be harmful; when He allows you to be persecuted, you will eventually be all the happier for the experience.'

> 'Ye trembling saints, fresh courage take;
> The clouds ye so much dread
> Are big with mercy, and will break
> In blessings on your head.'

iii. 14[b]–16. *How to meet opposition.*

Therefore do not be afraid; but consecrate yourselves to Christ; be prepared to give a courteous and intelligent answer to those

fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify in your hearts 15
Christ as Lord: *being* ready always to give answer to

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who ask you concerning the grounds of your faith; and let your arguments be reinforced by the testimony of a consistent life, by which all slanders will be refuted. In other words, let your Christianity be bold and confident, because it is genuine, rational, and practical.

14^a^, 15^b^. fear not their fear, &c. An application of the LXX (which follows the Hebrew) of Isa. viii. 12, 13, 'Fear not its [Judah's] fear, neither be troubled; the Lord, him do ye sanctify, and he shall be thy fear.' In Isaiah the prophet is forbidden to share the hopes and fears of the people amongst whom he lived, he is to fear God and hope in Him. Here the sense is different, 'Do not yield to the fear with which the enemies of the faith seek to possess your souls.'

15. sanctify: 'make holy'; see on i. 2, 15. Isa. viii. 13^a means, 'Make Jehovah the sole object of your worship, faith, and fear.'

in your hearts: not merely in outward profession.

Christ as Lord: the analogy of the LXX suggests rather 'the Lord Christ'; cf. Luke ii. 11, 'Christ the Lord.' In either case the use made by the Apostle of Isa. viii. 13 expressly identifies Christ with the Jehovah of the O. T. This point is lost by the A. V. which, following inferior MSS., has 'sanctify the Lord God.'

ready . . . to give answer. The Epistle does not direct the Christians to initiate evangelistic work; it constantly implies that there was a keen popular interest in Christianity. Persecution could not have arisen until the faith had attracted public attention; and, on the other hand, there is no advertisement like persecution. The gospel was then a novelty, and religious and philosophical questions excited far more interest amongst the general populace in Greek and Greek-speaking Oriental cities than they do amongst the masses in the West. Hence, under the circumstances of the time, the most efficacious way of making converts was to commend the faith by godly living, good-temper under abuse, and constancy in persecution, and to deal wisely with spontaneous inquirers.

answer (*apologia*): strictly a speech made by a prisoner in his defence, and so used of Paul's speech to the hostile Jewish mob at Jerusalem, Acts xxii. 1; also Acts xxv. 16 (R. V., 'defence'); and of Paul's defence when tried at Rome, 2 Tim. iv. 16. So Plato's *Apology* is in the form of a speech made by Socrates in his defence when tried for his life. Later on *Apologia* came to be the title of treatises written in defence of the Christian faith. Hence the science of Christian evidences is styled 'Apologetics' · this verse might serve for its motto.

every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope
16 that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: having a
good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against,
they may be put to shame who revile your good manner
17 of life in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God

The use of the term here implies that the inquirers would be critical or even hostile. Current slanders had put Christianity on its defence.

always . . . to every man. A most exacting demand upon the Apostle's readers. The 'answer' which was to be so universally available must have been brief, simple, and—from the Christian standpoint—obviously convincing; a few main facts about Christ, perhaps also the few great religious truths which prove themselves to men of spiritual discernment, and, certainly, the personal experience of the answerer.

asketh you a reason: better, 'calleth you to account.' 'Reason' is for *logos*, the 'word' of ii. 8, iii. 1, &c., but here 'account,' as in iv. 5, 'give account.' The 'calling to account' would often take the form of remonstrances on the folly of the Christian's ideas.

concerning the hope that is in you. The expectation of the glorification of Christ, of deliverance from sin and suffering, and of admission to the perfect bliss of intimate fellowship with God; an expectation that took shape for a time in the picturesque imagery of an immediate second coming, but was more worthily realized in the future life. To outsiders, the Christian hope was at once the most attractive and the most absurd feature of the faith, and would therefore be a frequent subject of inquiry.

with meekness and fear: see on iii. 4 and ii. 18. The contempt and ridicule which many of the 'inquirers' poured upon the faith made it very difficult for Christians to keep their temper and refrain from abuse. Hence there was great need for these graces; the 'fear' of God, the sense of a Divine presence, would keep them calm and courteous.

16. wherein ye are spoken against. The charge against the Christians was not merely that their religious views were unsound, but that their morals were bad, ii. 12; and to this also they were to be 'ready always to give answer,' even to masters or husbands, who were intimately acquainted with their lives; hence the need of a good conscience. A. V., with some ancient authorities, has 'whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers.'

manner of life: see on i. 15.

in Christ. The slanders against Christians reflected on the character and claims of Christ.

should so will, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing. Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the 18 righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in

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iii. 17, 18. *Christ our example.*

Christ an example of the suffering of the innocent, of the salvation which such suffering may bring to others, and of the future blessedness of the sufferers.

17. For it is better . . . that ye suffer for well-doing. The defence of the Christians might be logically complete, they might demonstrate the reasonableness of their faith, and vindicate their innocence, and yet they might suffer. Men are not often conciliated by being beaten in argument and put to shame as slanderers, and persecution is the natural weapon of those who are conscious that they are in the wrong. But it was better, especially for the cause of Christ, that they should suffer thus than that they should provoke ill-treatment by bad behaviour.

if the will of God should so will. The Greek, as in verse 14 (which see), implies that such suffering was not likely to be a common experience. The two 'wills' emphasize afresh the truth that the righteous suffer only when and as the Lord wills; cf. verses 12-14.

18. Christ also suffered: cf. ii. 21-25. For 'suffered' (*epathen*), which may be borrowed from ii. 21, we should probably read with some ancient MSS. 'died' (*apethanen*); in any case the reference is to the Passion.

In the Passion, the highest 'well-doing' seemed to be rewarded by the most terrible suffering; yet it was justified by the redemption of mankind. The Apostle's readers might be sure that their sufferings also would minister to the working out of that redemption.

put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit. The former clause refers to the Passion, the latter to the Resurrection. But Peter does not mean that the spirit had no share in the Passion; nor does he mean that the flesh had no share in the Resurrection, i.e. that there was no resurrection of the body. There is a contrast between the limited and subordinate nature of the suffering, and the infinite glory and power of Christ in his exaltation. His death was brought about by natural causes, and was an ordinary feature of the human life which he shared with other men; but his resurrection was supernatural (in the spirit[1]); it was connected with the unique spiritual endowments of Christ; cf. verse 19 and i. 11. It was different, for instance, from the

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[1] Cf. 1 Cor. x. 4, where the manna is styled 'spiritual meat.'

19 the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the

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raising of Lazarus: that only recalled him to ordinary human life; the resurrection of Christ restored him to his unique spiritual exaltation, and enabled him to bring to God those who believed on him. Cf. on i. 3.

Great, therefore, as were the sufferings of Christ, they prepared the way for a more than adequate recompense; there need be no fear that the lesser sufferings of his followers would be in vain.

The A. V. has 'quickened by the spirit,' but the analogy of 'in the flesh' clearly requires 'in the spirit.'

iii. 19, 20. *Christ and the spirits in prison.*

A special example of the blessed consequences of the suffering of Christ, his offer of salvation to 'the spirits in prison.'

19. in which: in the spirit, as distinguished from his human life; therefore at some period other than that life.

he went and preached unto the spirits in prison: cf. on iv. 6. The natural meaning of this sentence is that Christ offered salvation to beings in Hades (either fallen angels or (iv. 6) the unsaved of former generations) other than men living the ordinary human life on earth.

The further interpretation of the passage is a hopeless riddle. It is vague in itself, and evidently takes for granted some familiar tradition which is now lost. Even the above explanation is challenged, rather however on theological than on critical grounds.

The interpretation of almost every word in the sentence, and of all the implied circumstances, are matters of controversy. The chief points at issue are (*a*) the time and place of the preaching, (*b*) the subject of the preaching, (*c*) the persons preached to (the spirits), (*d*) the result of the preaching, (*e*) the meaning of 'in the spirit.' The views as to (*a*) largely determine the general interpretation. The following are some of the leading expositions of the verse:—

(i) Christ went and preached 'in the spirit' by inspiring Noah or Enoch (cf. i. 11) as the actual speaker to exhort the wicked generation just before the Flood. They are called 'the spirits in prison,' i. e. in Hades by anticipation, because they went to Hades at the time of the Flood, and were there when Peter wrote the Epistle. The subject of the preaching was the imminence of the Flood and the need of repentance; and the preaching was a failure—all of which seems quite irrelevant to the context.

This view has been held by various scholars from Augustine till the present time.

(ii) A few commentators have explained that Christ went and preached 'in the spirit' by inspiring the apostles after his Ascension to preach the gospel to the Jews or Gentiles or both, spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when 20

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whose 'spirits' were 'in the prison' of sin, like the antediluvians.

(iii) The most common view is that our Lord descended to Hades, the place of spirits after death, to preach to its inhabitants. But those who hold or have held this view are very much divided as to time, &c.

(*a*) *Time.* The preaching may have taken place either (1) before the Incarnation; (2) between the Passion and the Resurrection; or (3) after the Ascension. The second is the more probable. The 'preaching' is mentioned after the Passion, verse 18 'put to death,' and before the Ascension, verse 22. It is bracketed, as it were, with the Resurrection; both happened 'in the spirit,' i. e. were independent of the human life assumed at the Incarnation. Christ, as it has been said, while his body was in the tomb, was, like other dead, merely a spirit; but, unlike other spirits, he had energy; and so just as when a man he preached to men, so when a spirit he preached to spirits. Some such view is implied by the Apostles' Creed, 'He descended into hell,' i. e. Hades. That this is the meaning of 'prison' is shown from the parallels in 2 Pet. ii. 4, Jude 6; unless 'prison' is a lower depth than Hades, specially provided for special sinners.

(*b*) *The subject of the preaching.* According to some, Christ announced to the wicked their certain doom, the example serving to illustrate the suffering of evil-doers, verse 17. But the immediate context is not occupied with this topic; so that it seems better to understand that the preaching was an offer of salvation. This is quite in the line of thought; Peter is illustrating the blessed consequences of the suffering of the innocent, one of which, according to this view, would be that Christ, after his Passion, offered salvation to the spirits in Hades. Another view, that he declared to the righteous dead the accomplishment of their salvation, might supplement but not supersede the preceding.

(*c*) *The persons preached to.* (1) The parallels in 2 Pet. ii. 4, Jude 6 (which see), suggest that 'the spirits in prison' are the fallen angels of Gen. vi. Fallen men had their opportunity in the Levitical worship and the preaching of the gospel; it was natural that Christ's work should also include an offer of salvation to the fallen angels. The same line of thought, however, would further require that some express provision should have been made for those who knew nothing either of the law or the gospel. Nevertheless, there was no reason why Peter should exhaust the subject.

(2) It has been held that the 'spirits in prison' are the righteous dead, to whom Christ announced that their redemption had been

wrought out for them. This is unlikely in every way, especially in view of the reference to the antediluvians.

(3) The 'spirits in prison' are commonly identified, according to what seems the natural interpretation of verse 20, with the unbelieving generation who perished in the Flood. There is no satisfactory reason why they should have been singled out for this exceptional privilege, possibly as representatives of those who are cut off before their time, without full opportunity of repentance, yet 'the long-suffering of God . . . in the days of Noah' can only have waited for men, not for the fallen angels; they surely could not be drowned.

It is difficult to decide between (1) and (3); and the difficulty is enhanced by the fact that the decision seriously affects the teaching of the Bible as to the possibility of redemption after death. The adoption of (3) implies that Peter believed that in one instance, at any rate, the proffer of salvation had been made to men after death. Hence the exposition of this passage is apt to be influenced by the theological predilections of the expounder.

(*d*) *The result of the preaching.* This is not mentioned; but, if we suppose the preaching addressed to the fallen angels, or to the spirits of men who had not attained salvation during their lifetime, it must be implied that the preaching was successful, otherwise it could not be mentioned among the blessed results of Christ's suffering.

The source of Peter's information. The very obscurity and ambiguity of the passage show that the Apostle is not announcing a new truth, but referring to some narrative familiar to himself and his readers. No such narrative, which could have existed in Peter's time, is now extant. Early Christian literature contains a very large number of references to the 'descent into hell'; but they are largely imaginative expansions of the present passage: and it is very difficult to be certain that any of their statements rest on primitive tradition independent of 1 Peter.

According to some of the Fathers, however, there was a passage in the O. T. which, according to the exegesis of the first two or three centuries of the Christian era, would certainly have been regarded as a prediction of the descent into Hades. Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue with Trypho a Jew*, chaps. 71, 72, alleges that the Jews had removed from the O. T. many passages which would have testified to the truth of Christianity; thus he states that 'From the sayings of . . . Jeremiah these have been cut out: "The Lord God remembered His dead people of Israel who lay in the graves; and He descended to preach to them His own salvation."' The words which Justin states were cut out are quoted four times by Irenæus, once as from Jeremiah[1], once as from Isaiah[2], once as the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah,

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[1] IV. xxxvi. [2] III. xxii.

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from a prophet[1], and once as said by others[2]. Irenæus applies the words to Christ as a proof of his divinity and of his descent into Hades.

Justin's statement that this and other passages had been cut out by the Jews is generally rejected. It is more likely that Christian scribes interpolated them into some MSS. of the O. T. The passage cited may have been constructed on the basis of 1 Pet. iii. 19. It should be noted, however, that nothing is said in it about Noah or the Flood.

There are two passages in the Pauline Epistles which are sometimes supposed to refer to this subject. In Eph. iv. 9 we read, 'He descended into the lower parts of the earth'; but this may merely refer to the Incarnation, the descent to the earth. Again, Col. i. 20 speaks of Christ 'reconciling . . . things in the heavens.' In the Slavonic *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, the fallen angels are confined in a prison in the Second Heaven. This may represent a current idea known to Paul, and by the 'things in heaven' which needed 'reconciling' he may mean the fallen angels[3].

The clause 'descended into hell,' in the so-called Apostles' Creed, is not found in all the ancient copies of that creed, and probably was not part of it in its older editions. The clause has no equivalent in the Nicene Creed.

Rabbinical passages are quoted[4] which speak of the prisoners in Gehenna as rejoicing at the sight of the Messiah, and rising from hell with the Shechinah, the manifestation of the Divine presence, at their head.

The descent into Hades in early Christian literature outside the N. T. The descent of Christ into Hades to preach to the spirits of the dead was a favourite subject with early Christian writers, whose luxuriant imagination liberally enriched and embellished the meagre statements of Scripture.

20. disobedient: either because they, the fallen angels or the antediluvians, committed sins which broke God's moral law, or because the antediluvians refused to listen to Noah when he urged them to repent: cf. on 'preacher of righteousness,' 2 Pet. ii. 5.

the long-suffering of God waited. The reference is to an interpretation of Gen. vi. 3 which was prevalent when 1 Peter was written, and is still held by many scholars; according to which 'yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years' meant that the antediluvian race should be allowed to exist for another hundred and twenty years before it was swept away by the Flood.

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[1] V. xxxi. [2] IV. lv. [3] So Charles, *Secrets of Enoch*, p. xli.

[4] Weber and Kühl, in loco.

while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight
21 souls, were saved through water: which also after a true

Thus the Targum of Onkelos [1] translates Gen. vi. 3: 'Jehovah said, This evil generation shall not abide before me for ever: . . . a respite of an hundred and twenty years shall be given them to see if they will repent'; and the LXX has: 'My spirit shall not abide in these men for ever.'

The delay experienced by the Christians in the manifestation of the Divine justice was illustrated by the similar delay before the Flood; both were due to God's forbearance; both would issue in vindication of that justice by the punishment of the disobedient and the deliverance of believers.

through water: A. V., 'by water,' perhaps simply means 'at the time of the Flood,' or 'passing through water.' There may possibly be the somewhat subtle idea that while the waters drowned the wicked, the righteous were saved through the water carrying the ark on its surface. A rabbinical tradition says that, although Noah built the ark, he did not believe that there would be a flood, and would not enter the ark till he was driven into it by the rising water. Thus he would be saved by the water sending him into the ark. But it is not likely that any such legend underlies Peter's words; but cf. note on next verse.

iii. 21, 22. *Baptism.*

The Flood a type of baptism, the value of which does not lie in the physical cleansing, but in that which is symbolized thereby, the regeneration of the soul through the risen and exalted Christ.

21. which also after a true likeness: *lit.* as the R. V. marg., 'which in the antitype . . . baptism.' The general meaning obviously is that the experience of Noah and his family in passing through the water to ultimate safety was typical of the Christian experience of passing through the water of baptism to salvation. It is not very clear exactly how this sense is to be got from the actual words, and we cannot discuss the matter here, as it involves details of Greek grammar. The point of the figure is not very evident beyond the bare parallel that both the Flood and baptism were preliminary conditions of deliverance; in 1 Cor. x. 2 the passage of the Red Sea is spoken of as a baptism. Both passages seem to see in baptism a symbol of the spiritual storm and stress of the passage from a state of sin into the kingdom of God.

The term 'antitype' only occurs elsewhere in the N. T. in Heb. ix. 24, R. V.: 'like in pattern.'

In the A. V. here, 'The like figure whereunto,' 'whereunto' is from late MSS.

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[1] An Aramaic or Chaldee translation of the Pentateuch, compiled in the second century A. D.

likeness doth now save you, *even* baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection

not the putting away of the filth of the flesh. Christian baptism did not, like the Jewish ceremonial washings or baptisms, consist in the removal of any material uncleanness contracted by contact with unclean substances.

but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God. This is an unintelligible rendering of a very obscure and ambiguous passage; perhaps the Revisers intended to indicate that it was impossible to make sense of the Greek. 'Interrogation[1]' only occurs here in the N.T.; in the LXX of Dan. iv. 17 it is used in the sense of 'demand.' The corresponding verb is often used in the N. T. for 'ask a question'; and once for 'request' in Matt. xvi. 1: 'The Pharisees and Sadducees . . . requested him to show them a sign from heaven.' As alternatives, therefore, to 'interrogation' or 'asking a question' we have 'request' or 'requesting,' and—as it is maintained by some on the strength of a usage in mediæval or Byzantine Greek—'pledge.'

(*a*) Taking 'interrogation,' we have the R. V. (above); 'inquiry,' &c., &c., R. V. marg. But the idea of a baptized person or his conscience asking questions of or as to God is curious in itself and alien to the context. Neither the Greek nor the context support the rendering, 'the asking after, search after God,' or the R. V. marg., 'the appeal of a good conscience,' &c.

(*b*) 'The pledge,' &c., would refer to baptismal vows, but the Byzantine usage was probably not current in the Apostle's time, and it is not clear that our word was really used even in Byzantine times for pledge.

(*c*) The A. V., 'the answer of a good conscience,' makes very good sense, but cannot be the meaning of the Greek.

(*d*) We are, therefore, shut up to 'request.' With this sense of the word we might translate, 'the request which a good conscience makes to God'; but this is too vague; we should expect to be told what the good conscience requests. Hence we should render, 'the request which the baptized person makes for a good conscience towards God.' As regards fellow men, baptism is a symbol of Christian discipleship; as regards God, it is a request for grace to live so as to have a good conscience.

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The punctuation of the A. V. connects this clause with 'baptism . . . doth now save us,' treating the intervening words as a parenthesis. It may

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[1] *ἐπερώτημα.*

22 of Jesus Christ; who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

4 Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm

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also qualify the preceding clause. The R. V. reproduces the ambiguity of the Greek. The Resurrection is the source of life and righteousness, partly because it was the immediate occasion of the foundation of the church, and partly because it enabled believers to enter into fellowship with the risen and living Christ. Cf. i. 3.

This reference to the Resurrection resumes the description of the experiences of Christ from verses 18, 19.

22. on the right hand of God. The place of honour; in 1 Kings ii. 19 the queen-mother sits at the right hand of Solomon. Christ is often spoken of as sitting at the right hand of the Father, Luke xxii. 69; Acts vii. 55, 56; Rom. viii. 34; Eph. i. 20; Col. iii. 1; Heb. i. 3, viii. 1, x. 12, xii. 2. The figure is borrowed from Ps. cx. 1: 'Jehovah saith unto my lord, Sit thou at my right hand.' According to the Messianic application of that Psalm current in the N. T. times, 'my lord' was the Messiah. Hence the verse is applied to Christ in Mark xii. 36 and parallels (by Christ himself), Acts ii. 34; Heb. i. 13.

having gone into heaven: i. e. at the Ascension, in the account of which (Acts i. 10, 11) the Greek word used here for 'gone' occurs twice.

angels and authorities and powers: i. e. various classes of angels. Cf. on Jude 8.

being made subject. The subjection of all things to Christ is announced in 1 Cor. xv. 27; Eph. i. 22; Phil. iii. 21; and Heb. ii. 8, in connexion with quotation from Ps. viii. 7.

Verses 18–22 set forth a threefold activity of Christ; in verse 18, he redeems man by his Passion on the earth; in verse 19, he preaches to the 'spirits in prison'; in verse 22, he receives the submission of the angels in heaven.

iv. 1, 2. *Suffering purifies.*

Christ's suffering on earth our example; suffering for his sake subjects our life to the will of God.

1. Forasmuch. This verse resumes the main subject of the duty and privilege of suffering for righteousness' sake introduced in iii. 14–18.

suffered. Some ancient MSS. add 'for us,' so A. V.; others 'for you.'

in the flesh: in this present life, cf. next verse; perhaps ye yourselves also with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that ye no 2

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also suggesting that persecution only touched men's property and persons, not the inner life 'hid with Christ in God.'

arm . . . yourselves: provide yourselves with armour and weapons; i. e. let the 'mind' be your defence against the temptations involved in persecution, and enable you to resist and overcome them.

mind: rather, as R. V. marg., 'thought'; only elsewhere in the N. T. in Heb. iv. 12, where R. V. translates 'intents.'

the same thought: (*a*) may refer back to the opening words, 'the same thought, viz. that Christ suffered'; or (*b*) E. V., 'the same mind' would mean 'the same as that of Christ,' scarcely possible as a matter of Greek, which, however, might mean 'the same view,' i. e. 'arm yourselves by taking the same view of your suffering as Christ took of his'; or (*c*) the thought may be described in the following words, 'the same thought (which sustained Christ), namely, that he that hath suffered,' &c.

he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin. If we adopt (*a*) or (*b*) in the previous note, and take this clause in the sense 'for he,' &c., as giving a reason for imitating Christ's willing acceptance of suffering, then it means that such acceptance involves escape from sin. A righteous life brings with it suffering, in the effort required to relinquish selfish pleasures and unjust gain, in the discharge of unattractive duties, and in the endurance of persecution. Sin arises from the refusal to submit to this suffering; so far as a man has become willing to accept suffering for righteousness' sake, he is set free from sin.

If we adopt (*c*) in the previous note, and take the clause as stating what the thought is, then it might be understood as in the previous paragraph; or it may mean that the suffering of Christ atoned for sin, and released him from the connexion with sin which he accepted for our sake[1], and may also imply that by entering into the 'fellowship of his suffering,' we realize our salvation from the guilt and bondage of sin, 'are made to cease from sin.' Cf. Rom. vi. 7, 'He that hath died is justified from sin,' which has been explained, 'A dead man has his quittance from any claim that sin can make against him,' i. e. as physical death frees a man from the claims of human law, so the death to sin involved in faith in Christ, in appropriating salvation by identifying oneself with his atoning death, frees man from the claims of sin and of the law.

The reference, however, to suffering as atonement, although

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[1] 'Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf,' 2 Cor. v. 21.

longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh to
3 the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time
past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gen-

parallel to iii. 18, seems alien to the immediate context, which is concerned with suffering for righteousness' sake, and further, in the following verses, with a righteous life as the natural sequel to such suffering. It seems better, therefore, to understand this clause as commending patient endurance on account of its moral value.

2. ye . . . should live . . . your time: R. V. marg. and A. V., 'he . . . his time.' The Greek may be translated either way, and might be rendered 'that there may no longer for the remaining time be living,' &c.

the rest of your time in the flesh: the remainder of your earthly life.

to the lusts of men, . . . to the will of God. Contending influences sought to make the readers conform to one or other of two entirely different moral standards. The example and arguments of many of their neighbours, reinforced by their own natural desires and former habits[1], proposed inclination as the true guide to conduct; let men follow their natural impulses. Christ and the Spirit proposed to guide and correct men's impulses, whether natural or not, by referring them to the Divine will, to which life must be both surrendered and conformed.

The exhortation in these verses seems to be twofold: (*a*) You have already made sacrifices for your faith; do not lose the fruit of such conduct by lapsing into sin, but rather (*b*) be willing to make further sacrifices, because through cheerful endurance lies the path to a yet higher life.

iv. 3–5. *Former sins to be abandoned.*

Let, therefore, neither old evil habits nor former bad companions seduce you from your allegiance to God. He will judge those who tempt and persecute you.

3. the time past. The A. V. adds, with inferior MSS., 'of your life,' which is a correct interpretation of the text.

may suffice. Some ancient MSS. add 'us,' so the A. V., others 'you.' Note the Apostle's irony, 'You have given quite time enough to such conduct.'

to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles: 'to have devoted yourselves to realizing such desires as the Gentiles cherish and indulge.' This verse clearly implies that the readers of the Epistle, before their conversion, lived according to the lax tiles, and to have walked in lasciviousness, lusts, winebibbings, revellings, carousings, and abominable idola-

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[1] Verses 3 and 4.

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morality of the Gentiles; and, therefore, that most of them, at any rate, were Gentiles. No doubt there were some Jews who imitated the sins of the Gentiles; but the sins of the Jews, as a body, were different from those of the Gentiles, lying rather in greed and self-righteous censoriousness than in loose living. One cannot believe that, without further explanation, Paul would charge the Jewish Christians of Asia Minor, as a body, with having 'wrought the desire of the Gentiles,' &c.

lasciviousness (*aselgeia*). In the Greek this word, like those that follow, is plural, 'lascivious acts.' *Aselgeia* is perhaps rather 'lawless insolence and wanton caprice[1],' the rowdiness and horse-play associated with drunken debauchery.

lusts. In this connexion used specially of physical impurity.

winebibbings: *lit.* 'boilings over with wine'; only here in the N. T.

revellings. Only elsewhere in the N. T., Rom. xiii. 13; Gal. v. 21. The word is explained in a good sense as 'a jovial festivity with music and dancing'; in a bad sense as 'rowdy and indecent singing and drinking bouts.' The word *komos*, here translated 'revelling,' furnished Milton with the title of his masque of *Comus.*

carousings: *lit.* 'drinking-bouts'; only here in the N. T.

abominable: rather, 'contrary to law and order,' especially 'infringing the rights and dignity of a deity,' i. e. in a Christian document, 'of God.' Elsewhere in the N. T. only Acts x. 28, in Peter's address to Cornelius and his friends, where the word is translated 'unlawful,' thus: 'It is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation.' Those who hold that this Epistle was written to Jews explain this phrase 'idolatries forbidden by Jewish law': but, as has been already said, it is incredible that the Jewish Christians of Asia Minor, as a body, had once been given to idolatry. Some suppose that the term 'contrary to Divine law' is used from the Christian standpoint, idolatry being an insult to the Divine majesty. But the connexion supports the E. V. rendering, 'abominable.' Many of the heathen rites were cruel and impure, and reprobated by some of the nobler characters amongst the heathen themselves. The phrase probably refers to participation in such rites, which, apart from any question of mere idolatry, outraged the sense of common decency, and of what was seemly in Divine worship.

4. they think it strange. A single word in the Greek, a verb

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[1] Trench, *Synonyms.*

4 tries: wherein they think it strange that ye run not with
them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*:
5 who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the
6 quick and the dead. For unto this end was the gospel

used elsewhere in the N. T. to mean 'to be a guest'; in this sense in verse 12 and in Acts xvii. 20.

the same excess: as they themselves indulge in.

excess: R.V. marg., 'flood'; only here in the N. T., and rare elsewhere; *lit.* 'outpouring'; said to be used in the sense of 'slough,' if so here the figure is of 'running into the slough.' The R.V. text seems more probable.

riot. A cognate word is used in the parable of the Prodigal Son, in the phrase 'riotous living' (Luke xv. 13). 'Riot' is essentially 'wastefulness and riotous excess[1].'

speaking evil of you. As in ii. 12, iii. 16, iv. 14; *lit.* 'blaspheming' both Christians and Christ.

5. who: viz. the blasphemers.

ready: because the second coming of Christ as judge was regarded as imminent (see verse 7).

quick: Elizabethan for 'living.'

the quick and the dead: i. e. all generations of men; not, as some, the spiritually living—believers—and the spiritually dead—unbelievers.

iv. 6. *The preaching to the dead.*

Judgement embraces the dead, therefore was the gospel preached to them in order that, though they were once judged in the experiences of their earthly life, they may yet attain unto spiritual life.

6. This verse has been interpreted in very many different ways. The 'preaching to the dead' reminds one of the 'preaching to the spirits in prison' in iii. 19, another very disputed text. Again, the 'dead' here are no doubt the same as the 'dead' in verse 5. Some more or less improbable views may be mentioned briefly before the one adopted is given at greater length.

(*a*) The 'dead' are those dead in trespasses and sins, and the verse describes the object with which the gospel was preached to them.

(*b*) The 'dead' are Christians to whom the gospel was preached in their lifetime, who were condemned by men, but destined by God to everlasting life.

(*c*) The 'dead' are certain of the 'evil-speakers,' who have died, but will not therefore escape judgement. The gospel was preached

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[1] Trench, *Synonyms*.

preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

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to them during their lifetime with a view to their salvation, but fruitlessly.

But all such views seem to require a very strained interpretation of the various clauses in the verse, and it is better to take 'dead' in its natural sense of the dead generally, and to interpret thus—

(*d*) The 'dead' are those who died before the gospel was preached on earth, but they heard it in the abode of the dead (iii. 19).

The following is a detailed exposition of the verse according to this view.

For. It was natural that those who had heard the gospel in their lifetime, and thus had every opportunity of salvation, should be judged; and it is also right that the dead should be judged, *for* they have also heard the gospel.

the gospel preached . . . to the dead. In iii. 19 the idea of our Lord preaching to the dead was applied to a particular class, Noah's contemporaries; here it is generalized. See also on iii. 19. The vague and perhaps ambiguous character of these two passages render it impossible for us to find out exactly what Peter had in his mind. Certainly we must not credit him with believing all that is contained in the extant narratives of the Descent into Hades. In any case the dead to whom the preaching was addressed had not heard the gospel during their lifetime. The word for 'preaching' is different in the two verses.

that they might be judged. This clause is a little difficult to explain according to the interpretation followed here. The sense, however, requires us to take it as equivalent to 'although or after they had been judged,' &c.; and according to some distinguished scholars, at any rate, this is a possible meaning of the Greek.

according to men: after the manner of men's experience, as it must happen to men, as men, to be judged.

in the flesh: probably refers specially to death, thought of as the universal consequence of human sin, in accordance with Gen. ii. 17. In principle the reference would include the material suffering which follows sin in the present life, and the clause might be paraphrased, 'Though in their earthly life and death they endured the suffering which is the common doom of sinful men.'

that they might . . . live. The object of the preaching was the salvation of those addressed.

according to God in the spirit. The contrast here is

7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore
8 of sound mind, and be sober unto prayer: above all things
being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love

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parallel to that in iii. 18, where it is said of Christ that he was 'put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit.' As the 'dead' shared the lot of men in death, so, if they accepted the gospel preached to them, they would share the eternal life of God, with its supernatural (in the spirit) characteristics.

iv. 7–11. *Recapitulation.*

Recapitulation of the chief points of previous exhortations, enforced by the consideration of the imminence of the second coming.

7. the end of all things: i.e. the second coming, the resurrection of the dead, the judgement.

is at hand. See on Jas. v. 7, 8.

therefore. The thought that the judgement is near, and the time short for serving God and man in the present life, is to stimulate devotion towards God, and love and helpfulness towards men. So in the parable of the Wise Steward, Christ says, 'Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing,' i.e. giving the household 'their portion of food in due season' (Luke xii. 42, 45). Contrast the conduct of the Jews of Isaiah's time, when they expected the judgement of Jehovah in the capture of Jerusalem by the Assyrians, and said, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die' (Isa. xxii. 13). Similarly, Paul (1 Cor. xv. 32) quotes the same saying as a natural utterance for men who did not expect any resurrection.

be . . . of sound mind: sometimes to be sane, as opposed to insane; more commonly, as here, in a more general sense, to be discreet, temperate, and reasonable, to exercise self-control.

be sober unto prayer. See on i. 13. To 'be of sound mind' puts the idea positively, to 'be sober' negatively. The idea that the Second Coming would naturally lead men, as it did some of the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv. 9—v. 11, 2 Thess. ii. 1—iii. 15), and has done many others since, into restless excitement, grotesque folly, and even into immorality. The qualities Peter emphasizes would enable them to avoid such errors.

unto prayer: *lit.* 'prayers.' Irrational and restless excitement makes true prayer impossible.

8. fervent. See on i. 22.

love among yourselves. Cf. i. 22, ii. 1, 17, iii. 8. In this verse, as in many other places, the A.V. has 'charity' for 'love'; 'charity' having the sense of the Latin *caritas,* used in the Latin translation of the Bible for 'Christian love,' from which it is derived. But as the A.V. 'charity' is constantly taken to

covereth a multitude of sins: using hospitality one to 9
another without murmuring: according as each hath 10

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mean 'almsgiving,' or 'an indulgent attitude towards one's neighbour's shortcomings,' it is well that the R. V. has returned to the older English translation 'love[1],' used by Tindale and Coverdale.

love covereth a multitude of sins. A free quotation of Prov. x. 12, 'Love covereth all transgressions[2]' (cf. Jas. v. 20). The preceding clause in Proverbs is 'hatred stirreth up strifes,' which shews that 'covering . . . sins' means forgiving the sins of others. The verse in Proverbs might be paraphrased, 'Hatred seeks an occasion of quarrel, and sets people against one another by ill-natured and slanderous tale-bearing; love is willing to overlook offences against itself, and does not try to make bad blood between others.' If this is the meaning here it is parallel to ii. 1. But our clause may have been current as a popular proverb without the preceding words, and Peter may have used it without any recollection of its context in the O. T. Even then, however, the meaning given above is the most probable, though some prefer, 'Love covers the sins of him who loves'; and the parallel passage in James suggests that 'love covers sins by converting the sinner.'

9. hospitality: also commended in Rom. xii. 13; 1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 8; Heb. xiii. 2.

without murmuring. There were many claims upon the hospitality of the early Christians, on the part of itinerant preachers, refugees from persecution, and others. These claims would often be burdensome to a small and poor community. Moreover, there soon arose a class who habitually sponged on the liberality of the churches (see on 2 Pet. ii. 3; Jude 4, 12). A. V., 'without grudging.'

10, 11. These verses are similar in form and substance to Rom. xii. 6, 7; for details see following notes.

10. according as each hath received a gift. Cf. Rom. xii. 6, 'having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us.' 'Gift' (*charisma*) only occurs elsewhere in the N. T. in the Pauline Epistles, chiefly in Romans and 1 Corinthians. It is used here, as often by Paul, as a technical term for any faculty of Christian service bestowed by God on the believer, e. g. as in 1 Cor. xii. 8–10 (see also the whole chapter and vii. 7), 'the word of wisdom . . . the word of knowledge . . . faith . . . gifts of healings . . . workings of miracles . . . prophecy . . . discernings of spirits . . . divers kinds of tongues . . . the interpretation of tongues.'

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[1] For the Greek ἀγάπη.

[2] Following the Hebrew, from which the LXX varies considerably.

received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good
11 stewards of the manifold grace of God; if any man
speaketh, *speaking* as it were oracles of God; if any man
ministereth, *ministering* as of the strength which God
supplieth: that in all things God may be glorified through
Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the dominion for
ever and ever. Amen.

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial

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ministering it among yourselves: each using his special gift for the benefit of all the rest.

stewards. A favourite idea of Paul, e.g. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 'Let a man so account of us, as of *ministers*' (cf. above) 'of Christ, and *stewards* of the mysteries of God'; Eph. iii. 2, 'If . . . ye have heard of the stewardship of that grace of God which was given me'; and Titus i. 7, 'The overseer . . . must be blameless as God's steward.'

manifold[1]. Cf. Jas. i. 2. In Eph. iii. 10 the 'wisdom of God' is styled 'muchly-manifold[2].' The reference is to that variety of gifts which is illustrated by Rom. xii. and 1 Cor. xii.

11. speaketh: exercises the gifts of prophecy (preaching), teaching, speaking with tongues, interpretation of tongues, &c.

speaking **as it were oracles of God:** only speaking under a clear consciousness of Divine inspiration, an injunction which would lead to much profitable silence. 1 Cor. xiv. 26–33 shews that the eagerness of early Christians to talk led to much dissension and disorder.

ministereth: exercises the gifts of healing, relief of the poor, tending the sick, &c.

whose is . . . Amen. This ascription of praise refers to Christ, not to God (cf. i. 21, v. 10, and similar doxologies in Heb. xiii. 21; Rev. i. 5, 6). The doxology, like that in v. 10, 11, concludes one of the main divisions of the Epistle.

iv. 12—v. 11. Exhortation to Christian constancy, with special applications to different classes of readers.

iv. 12–14. *The duty of patient endurance.*

The Apostle yet once more exhorts to patience under persecution, according to the example of Christ and in the assurance of future bliss.

12. Beloved: introducing a main division of the Epistle, as in ii. 11.

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[1] *ποικίλος.* [2] *πολυποίκιλος.*

among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as
though a strange thing happened unto you: but insomuch 13
as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at
the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with
exceeding joy. If ye are reproached for the name of 14
Christ, blessed *are ye*; because the *Spirit* of glory and

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think it not strange. Cf. on iv. 4. Since, as Christians, they were special objects of God's love and care, they might naturally 'think it strange' that they were singled out for exceptional suffering.

the fiery trial among you . . . to prove you. Cf. i. 6, 7, 'the proof of your faith . . . proved by fire.' The words 'trial' and 'prove' suggest one explanation of the apparent strangeness; affliction was a discipline which tested, confirmed, and developed Christian character.

13. partakers of Christ's sufferings. The burden of the mystery of suffering is lightened when we remember that it was shared by the well-beloved Son of God. Cf. i. 11, ii. 21, iii. 18, iv. 1, and Phil. iii. 10, 'That I may know the fellowship of his sufferings'; 2 Cor. i. 7, 'Ye are partakers of the sufferings' (of Christ); and Col. i. 24, 'I . . . fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ.' The sufferings of the persecuted Christians were part of the sufferings of Christ, because their endurance was inspired by his Spirit; they suffered for righteousness' sake, and their constancy tended to the salvation of men and the glory of God.

the revelation of his glory. Cf. i. 5, 7, 13.

rejoice. Cf. i. 8.

14. reproached for the name of Christ: i. e. because they were called Christians, and so bore the name of Christ (cf. verse 16). These verses imply that Christianity itself might be a crime in the eyes of the general public, if not in that of the law. Hence they have been cited as proof that the Epistle was not written till A. D. 80 or later, because before that time, at any rate, the law of the empire did not regard Christianity in itself as a crime (cf. Introduction, pp. 41 ff.). This verse may be a reminiscence of our Lord's saying (Matt. v. 11), 'Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you . . . for my sake.' Cf. iii. 14.

the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God: more exactly, 'that Spirit which is at once the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God.' Some ancient MSS. add 'and of power' after 'glory.' Only here is the Spirit styled the Spirit of glory; in the O. T. 'glory' sometimes means 'God made manifest.' The presence of the Spirit was an assurance that the manifestation of God's glory

15 the Spirit of God resteth upon you. For let none of you
suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as
16 a meddler in other men's matters: but if *a man suffer* as
a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify
17 God in this name. For the time *is come* for judgement

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through His Spirit, i. e. the Second Coming, would actually take place, and that the Christians would have their share in it.

resteth upon you: in contrast to men's reproaches. Cf. Isa. xi. 2, 'The spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him.' After 'upon you' the A. V. adds, with inferior MSS., 'on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.'

iv. 15, 16. *The blessedness of suffering for Christ.*

Let no one bring dishonour on Christ by suffering just punishment for crimes actually committed by him; but let him glory in punishment inflicted because he is a Christian.

15. none of you. Emphatic in the Greek, 'no single one of you.'

a meddler in other men's matters. In the Greek, 'another-folks'-overseer[1],' a masterful busybody; a single word, found nowhere else in Greek literature except in later passages, where it is probably borrowed from this verse; it may have been invented by Peter. 1 Tim. v. 13 bids the women not be 'busybodies[2].' Meddling—whether from undue zeal to conform the customs of non-Christians to the Christian standard, as some explain the passages, or from love of power or 'managing'—is not a sufficiently serious crime to be grouped with murder. Possibly this rare word is the equivalent of the technical term for some class of criminal, but we cannot say what class. Note, however, that the repetition of 'as' somewhat separates this word from the preceding.

16. Christian. Only elsewhere in the N. T., Acts xi. 26, xxvi. 28. Obviously, if the ostensible charge was of some crime, but the real cause of offence the profession of Christianity, the Christian might equally glory. Cf. verse 14.

glorify God in this name: accept and glory in the name Christian, and at the same time praise God for the grace by which came faith and salvation.

iv. 17-19. *Be steadfast.*

Persevere in holy living and in confident trust in God, for the judgement is at hand, alike for believers and unbelievers.

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[1] ἀλλοτριοεπίσκοπος. [2] περίεργοι.

to begin at the house of God: and if *it begin* first at us,
what *shall be* the end of them that obey not the gospel
of God? And if the righteous is scarcely saved, where 18
shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Wherefore let them 19
also that suffer according to the will of God commit their
souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator.

The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am 5

The righteous may well tremble at the thought—but what of the ungodly?

17. the time is come **for judgement to begin at the house of God.** The sufferings of the persecuted Christians were a beginning of the judgement (not merely 'judgement'); they were a trial which sifted faithful from unfaithful. As yet the heathen were not called to account.

the end of them that obey not: the doom not only of the persecutors and other heathen, but also of professing Christians who were disloyal to Christ.

In Ezek. ix. 6 judgement begins at the house of God, and in Jer. xxv. 29 at the city of God.

18. A quotation of Prov. xi. 31 from the LXX, which differs considerably from the Hebrew.

ungodly[1]**:** the opposite of 'godly' (cf. on 'godliness' in 2 Pet. i. 3).

19. A summary of the main ideas of the Epistle, persecution an instrument of Divine discipline, they 'suffer according to the will of God'; the necessity of faith, that they may 'commit their souls to Him'; the duty of consistency, 'in well-doing'; and the certainty that their faith will be justified, because it is reposed in 'a faithful Creator.'

their souls: their spiritual interests, now and hereafter (cf. i. 9).

unto a faithful Creator. The A. V., following inferior MSS., prefixes 'as' to this clause. Since God created the soul at its first beginning, and also bestowed upon it the new life which is in Christ, the Christian may well trust to God to be 'faithful' to the interests of His redeemed creature and to His own promises.

v. 1–5. *Elders.*

Let the elders be disinterested and conciliatory in their governa fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

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[1] ἀσεβής, &c., four times in Romans, three in Timothy and Titus, once in 1 Peter, three times in 2 Peter, six times in Jude.

2 Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according

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ment of the church; let the younger submit to them; and let all shew mutual deference.

1. the elders. Verse 2 (which see) speaks of them as 'acting as overseers[1],' and implies that they were church officials; verse 5 contrasts them with the 'younger,' and thus implies that they were the 'older.' The government of a local church in N. T. times lay in the hands of a committee called almost indifferently 'elders' or 'overseers.' Peter seems to take for granted that the official 'elders' would be the older members of the community. This simple and loosely defined organization points to an early date for the Epistle.

fellow-elder: in years, and in the cares and burdens of authority; the latter either because he counted his apostleship as a kind of eldership, or because he acted as one of the elders of the church where he lived.

fellow-elder . . . witness . . . partaker. Peter commends his message to their sympathy by associating himself with them, to their obedience by suggesting his authority as an eye-witness of the sufferings of Christ (cf. Acts i. 21, 22).

witness. The Greek connects this very closely with fellow-elder, 'One who is at the same time fellow-elder and witness.' Hence it has been understood as 'fellow-witness,' i. e. both Peter and the elders bore witness by their preaching to the sufferings of Christ. Even if this is the meaning, the word must have reminded both the Apostle and his readers that he was an eye-witness, and they, as a class at any rate, were not.

partaker of the glory. Cf. iv. 13.

2. Tend. Cf. ii. 25; *Ps. Sol.* xvii. 45, 'Tend the Lord's flock[2].'

among you: rather, 'with you,' i. e. 'the flock so far as you have to do with it,' the particular Christian society committed to your care.

exercising the oversight. Omitted by some ancient MSS.; the words may have been inserted to explain the figure in the previous clause.

not of constraint: not merely because of the obligations of their official position.

according unto God: in Divine fashion, following the example

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[1] *ἐπίσκοπος*, the original of our 'bishop,' in which sense *ἐπίσκοπος* came to be used later on.

[2] Hühn, *A. T. Cit.*

unto God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but 3
making yourselves ensamples to the flock. And when 4
the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive
the crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye 5
younger, be subject unto the elder. Yea, all of you gird
yourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God
resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

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of Christ (cf. ii. 25). The phrase, however, is omitted by some ancient MSS.

for filthy lucre. A single word, an adverb, in the Greek, 'from dishonourable greed of gain[1]'; similarly, 1 Tim. iii. 8 lays down that the deacon, and Titus i. 7 that the 'overseer[2],' must not be 'greedy of filthy lucre[3].' 'Lucre' (=gain) is the Latin *lucrum* of the Vulgate written as an English word through the influence of the French *lucre*. Our versions here follow Tindale. Cf. Heb. xiii. 5.

of a ready mind: with spontaneous zeal.

3. the charge allotted to you: *lit.* 'the lots,' i. e. allotted portions. A less probable view of the clause is the A. V., 'God's heritage.' Cf. 2 Cor. i. 24; Heb. xiii. 7.

4. chief Shepherd: Christ (cf. ii. 25; Heb. xiii. 20).

manifested. Cf. iv. 13.

crown: a wreath of flowers or foliage, worn by victors in games, and by honoured guests.

that fadeth not away: in contrast to the earthly wreaths which *did* fade (cf. i. 4).

5. Likewise, ye younger. Cf. iii. 1, 7, v. 2.

Yea, all of you. So the R. V. text, treating these words as the beginning of a new sentence. The R. V. marg., by an alteration in the punctuation of the Greek, and the omission, with the best MSS., of 'to serve,' obtains the rendering, 'Likewise, ye younger, be subject unto the elder; yea, all of you to one another. Gird yourselves,' &c. The A. V. obtains the same sense, somewhat differently, 'Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed,' &c.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. A quotation (Prov. iii. 34) from the LXX, which differs slightly from

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[1] *αἰσχροκερδῶς*, only here in the N. T.

[2] R. V. text, 'bishop.'

[3] *αἰσχροκερδής*, only in these two passages in the N. T.; in 1 Tim. iii. 8 'not greedy of filthy lucre' is not found in the oldest MSS.

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of
7 God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all
8 your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you. Be
sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring
lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
9 whom withstand stedfast in your faith, knowing that the
same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who

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the Hebrew, quoted in the same words in Jas. iv. 6. Cf. Prov. xxix. 23; Isa. lvii. 15, lxvi. 2.

v. 6–11. *Concluding exhortation.*

The duty of submissive trust in God, and of watchfulness and constancy. God will uphold them, and bring them into His glory. Short doxology.

6. **in due time**: i. e. at 'the revelation of Jesus Christ' (i. 7, iv. 13). An ancient MS. reads 'in the time of visitation.'

7. **anxiety.** A less ambiguous word than the A. V. 'care'; moreover, the Greek words for 'anxiety' and 'careth' are entirely different. The verse is a reminiscence of Ps. lv. 22, 'Cast thy burden upon Jehovah, and he shall sustain thee,' with the LXX of which it presents points of verbal agreement.

8. **Be sober.** Cf. i. 13, iv. 7.

be watchful. A frequent exhortation, e. g. 1 Cor. xvi. 13; Rev. iii. 2. It is the word twice used by our Lord in his remonstrance to the Apostle in Gethsemane: 'Simon, sleepest thou? couldest thou not *watch* one hour? *Watch* and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' Mark xiv. 37 f.

your adversary the devil. 'Adversary' is strictly an opponent in a lawsuit, and is so used in the only other passages in which the word occurs in the N. T. (Matt. v. 25; Luke xii. 58, xviii. 3); this is also sometimes the meaning of the Hebrew *Satan*, e. g. Ps. cix. 6, which became a proper name for the devil. Thus in Zech. iii, Satan appears as the prosecutor, so to speak, in a charge against the High Priest. In Rev. xii. 10, Satan is called 'the accuser of the brethren.' Any lapse on the part of the Christians would enable Satan to convict them of sin and secure their punishment. It is suggested that there is a hint that the 'adversaries' who prosecuted the Christians in the law-courts were inspired by the devil.

seeking whom he may devour. Cf. Luke xxii. 31, addressed to Peter.

9. **stedfast in your faith**: R. V. marg., 'the faith,' firm in their loyalty to Christ.

the same sufferings . . . in your brethren (*lit.* 'brother-

are in the world. And the God of all grace, who called 10
you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have
suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, stablish,
strengthen you. To him *be* the dominion for ever and 11
ever. Amen.

By Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I account *him*, I 12
have written unto you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that

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hood') **who are in the world.** This clause apparently means that the readers of the Epistle shared their troubles with the whole Christian brotherhood; therefore their trial was not 'strange,' no mark of Divine displeasure or neglect; and they should imitate the constancy so abundantly displayed by other Christians.

10, 11. Cf. 1 Thess. v. 23–28; 2 Thess. iii. 16–18; Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

The A. V., following for the most part inferior MSS., adds 'Jesus' after 'Christ,' 'settle' after 'strengthen,' 'glory and' before 'dominion.' For 'Christ Jesus' see on 'Jesus Christ' (Jas. i. 1).

v. 12–14. *Closing salutations.*

12. Silvanus: a name often contracted into Silas. This Silvanus is commonly identified with the Silas who accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts xv. 40—xviii. 5, 22), the first portion of which was devoted to Asia Minor. Silas is styled Silvanus in 2 Cor. i. 19; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1. If the identification is correct, the mention of Silvanus and Marcus helps to explain the Pauline character of the Epistle. Although Silas was a common name—borne, for instance, by four persons mentioned by Josephus—the identification is probable, for the Silas of Acts was an important member of the church of Jerusalem (Acts xv. 22); he was therefore well known to Peter before he joined Paul, and after leaving the latter he may very well have returned to Jerusalem and again have become associated with Peter.

I have written: i.e. the present letter; better, 'I am writing.' Silvanus was the bearer of the letter, who is commended to the churches by this paragraph. Some, however, suppose that he was the Apostle's amanuensis (cf. Rom. xvi. 22), or even that this paragraph is an avowal that Silvanus was the real author of the Epistle, and that the ascription to Peter was a mere literary form, or that the Apostle only endorsed and accepted it. Some very slight support for this view may be derived from the 'as I account him,' which might be due to the modesty of Silvanus in speaking of himself. The whole phrase, however, may very well

13 this is the true grace of God: stand ye fast therein. She that is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, saluteth you;
14 and *so doth* Mark my son. Salute one another with a kiss of love.

Peace be unto you all that are in Christ.

mean 'whom I hold to be,' &c. The Greek word[1] does not imply the uncertainty suggested by the A. V. 'I suppose.' Cf. Introduction, pp. 43 f.

this is the true grace of God. The grace which they had experienced in conversion, and in the blessedness and progress of Christian life, was no delusion, as they were tempted to suppose by their troubles, but the genuine grace of God.

13. She that is in Babylon, elect together with you. As this salutation is coupled with that of Marcus, we might suppose an individual to be meant; but it is difficult to believe that any woman—even Peter's wife, as some suppose—would send her greeting to the churches of Asia Minor in this mysterious way. Hence the clause probably refers to a church. Cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 19; 2 John 1, 13.

Babylon. Probably Rome (see Introduction, p. 44).

Mark my son. Usually identified with the 'John Mark' who was the companion of Paul at the beginning of the first journey, but deserted the Apostle, was refused permission to join him for the second journey, and went on a separate tour with Barnabas (Acts xii. 25, xiii. 5, xv. 37). Afterwards he was reconciled to Paul (Col. iv. 10). Mark was a Jerusalem Jew, connected with leading members of the church (Acts xii. 12), so that we may apply to him what was said above of Silvanus. Mark was a cousin of Barnabas (Col. iv. 10).

a kiss of love: a token of Christian brotherhood (Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 26). Later on the 'kiss of peace' became a regular ceremony of public worship. After a while it was restricted to men kissing men, and women women. This rite disappeared in the West in the thirteenth century, but is still observed in some Eastern churches.

14. Christ. A.V. adds 'Jesus, Amen,' with insufficient authority. See on v. 10 and Jas. i. 1.

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[1] *λογίζομαι.*

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF

PETER

SIMON Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to 1
them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in

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i. 1, 2. *Salutation.*

The Apostle Peter greets his fellow Christians, and prays that the Divine blessings they enjoy may be multiplied through their increasing knowledge of Divine truth.

On the general form of the salutation see on 1 Pet. i. 1.

Simon: so the Vatican MS., most of the other MSS. have **Symeon,** a form of the Apostle's name only found elsewhere in Acts xv. 14, James's speech at the Council of Jerusalem. Symeon is probably correct. It is the more accurate reproduction of the Hebrew name, and perhaps suggests the sympathy of the author with the Jewish churches. Simeon, like Jude, was originally the name of one of the twelve tribes, and in the O. T. is only so used. It is derived, in Gen. xxix. 33, from *shama* (heard); and this derivation may have influenced parents to give this name to sons in whom they saw the token that God had *heard* their prayers. The name, usually in its Greek form 'Simon,' was very common in N. T. times; it is the name of several persons mentioned in the Gospels, Acts, and Josephus.

Simon Peter: so Matt. xvi. 16; Luke v. 8; John i. 41; and *passim*; never in Mark or Acts. This form of the name is an abbreviation of 'Simon, called,' or 'surnamed Peter' (Matt. x. 2; Acts x. 5). 'Simeon Peter' only occurs here; in 1. Pet. i. 1 we have simply 'Peter.'

a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ. This double designation only occurs elsewhere in Rom. i. 1, 'Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle'; and Titus i. 1, 'Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ.' For 'servant' see on Jas. i. 1, for 'apostle' on 1. Pet. i. 1.

obtained: *lit.* 'obtained by lot,' 'were alloted,' used in John

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the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ:

xix. 24 of casting lots for the garments of Jesus. The word implies receiving through Divine favour apart from any merit or effort of the recipient.

a like precious faith with us. 'Faith,' here and in verse 5, man's response to God's call; as in Eph. ii. 8, 'By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.' Some explain it, as in Jude 3, of the truths believed; see also Jas. i. 3. 'A like precious,' in Greek a single word, *isotimon* (R. V. marg., *lit.* 'equally precious'), only found in the N. T.; 'precious' in the esteem of those who possessed it, and in the privileges and blessings it conferred. 'Us' is variously explained as meaning the Apostle himself; or the apostles generally, compared with those addressed; or Jewish Christians, compared with the readers, who would then be Gentiles; or even Christians generally, in relation to the particular church addressed. In any case, the phrase implies that the writer and his readers are on the same plane of spiritual earnestness and experience; a touch of tactful courtesy quite in the manner of Paul; cf. too the 'fellow-elder' of 1 Pet. v. 1, and Peter's speech (Acts xi. 17), 'God gave unto them [Cornelius and his household, Gentiles] the like gift as he did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.'

in the righteousness of: i. e. which we all obtained through that Divine righteousness which is no respecter of persons.

our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. According to this translation (R. V. text) one Person, Jesus Christ, is referred to, and is described as 'God and Saviour.' This view of the words is supported by the parallel phrase, 'our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' i. 11, ii. 20, iii. 18. Christ is spoken of as God in Acts xx. 28, 'the church of God[1], which he purchased with his own blood'; Rom. ix. 5, 'Christ . . . who is over all, God blessed for ever[2]'; Heb. i. 8, 'But of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God'; and was addressed by Thomas (John xx. 28), 'My Lord and my God.' Compare, too, the reference in the next verse to Christ's '*Divine* power.' Nevertheless, the use of God as a descriptive epithet of Christ is very striking, and has no certain parallel in the N. T. (on Titus ii. 13 see below); but in Ignatius' letter to the Ephesians, xviii. 2, we read, 'Mary was pregnant with our God, Jesus, the Christ.'

The Sinaitic MS. and some versions have 'Lord' instead of 'God,' probably a correction, intended to remove the difficulty, and suggested by the formula in i. 11, &c.

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[1] Perhaps, however, 'the Lord' should be read.

[2] The rendering, however, of this passage is quite uncertain.

Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge 2
of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that his divine 3

It is possible, however, to translate, as in R. V. marg., 'our God, and the Saviour,' a rendering supported by the general usage of the N. T., by the separate references to God and Jesus in verse 2, and by the fact that in the parallel formula in Titus i. 4 'God the Father' is distinguished from 'Christ Jesus our Saviour.'

Titus ii. 13 is an exact parallel; there, too, it is uncertain whether the translation should be, as in R. V. text, 'our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ' or, as in R. V. marg., 'of the great God and our Saviour.'

Saviour Jesus Christ. Christ is spoken of as 'Saviour' in Luke ii. 11; John iv. 42; Acts v. 31, xiii. 23; Eph. v. 23; Phil. iii. 20; 1 John iv. 14; but the phrase 'our Saviour Jesus Christ' is characteristic of 2 Timothy (i. 10); Titus (i. 4, ii. 13, iii. 6), and 2 Peter (i. 1, 11, ii. 20, iii. 2, 18).

2. The parallel formula in 1 Pet. i. 2 is simply 'Grace to you and peace be multiplied'; Jude 2 has 'Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied.'

knowledge of God. The Greek word, *epignōsis*, means advanced knowledge, yet fuller than that which they already had; grace and peace were to be multiplied through progress in knowledge. The word occurs fifteen times in the Pauline Epistles, once in Hebrews, and four times in this Epistle; nowhere else in the N. T. In the second century there was much controversy between the church and heretical schools as to the true *gnōsis* or knowledge of Divine truth. *Epignōsis* would be the highest, most certain truth; something more than *gnōsis*.

The 'knowledge of God,' &c., probably includes knowledge about God, &c., and knowledge given by God, &c.

i. 3-11. *Be steadfast and consistent.*

In Christ, by the revelation made through him and concerning him, and the promises which he makes and guarantees, God offers us all that is necessary for the highest life; that you may escape from corruption and become partakers of the Divine nature. Since then God has done His part, see that you do yours; seek diligently all Christian graces. So shall you render intelligent service to your Master, and not drift blindly back to your old evil life. Therefore seek such graces diligently as the seal of your Christian calling, for those who thus seek are kept from stumbling, and are assured of a glorious entrance into Christ's eternal kingdom.

3. seeing that. The R. V. puts a semicolon after verse 2, and a full stop after verse 4, thus making verses 3 and 4 the reason for the prayer in verse 2; but this is contrary to the

power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that
4 called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he

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analogy of the other Epistles and does not give a good sense. It seems better, therefore, to place a full stop after verse 2, and a comma after verse 4, thus making verses 3 and 4 the ground of the exhortation in verses 5–7.

his: Christ's.

divine power. A rare phrase; it occurs, with other parallels to verses 3–11, in a Carian inscription, about A. D. 22, in honour of Zeus and Hecate. Our author either used the inscription as he did Jude, or borrowed from the Pagan liturgical language of Asia Minor. (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, pp. 360 ff.)

life: the life of the soul, here and hereafter.

godliness. This word and its cognates, 'godly,' 'to be godly,' only occur in the N. T. in Acts (five times), the Pastoral Epistles (thirteen times), and this Epistle (five times). The Greek word, *eusebeia*, which is often found in pagan inscriptions, means due reverence towards God, expressing itself in worship and in a devout and obedient life. In classical Greek it is also used for filial piety. In the LXX it translates 'fear' (of God), and is coupled, as here, with 'knowledge,' Prov. i. 7; Isa. xi. 2, xxxiii. 6.

knowledge of. See verse 2.

him that called us. 'Him' and the following 'his,' and, in verse 4, 'he' and 'his' refer to the same Person, either the Father or Christ; it is not clear which. A similar ambiguity is found in many passages, probably because the writers closely identified the Son and the Father, and they did not feel it necessary to indicate clearly which was intended.

by his own glory and virtue: so Sinaitic MS., &c., certainly the correct reading; the Vatican MS., &c., have 'Through glory,' &c., by an obvious mistake. The A.V. 'to glory,' &c., is an incorrect rendering of the latter reading. 'Virtue' (*arete*) is only attributed to God or Christ here and in the somewhat parallel passage (1 Pet. ii. 9), 'That ye may shew forth the virtues (E. V. excellencies) of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' The only other places where the words occurs in the N. T. are Phil. iv. 8 and 2 Pet. i. 5. *Arete* was the 'common heathen term for moral excellence,' but in the LXX it is used to translate words meaning 'glory' and 'praiseworthiness'; and thus becomes a synonym of *doxa* (glory). Probably (but cf. verse 5) it is so used here, and the phrase 'glory and virtue' is a kind of compound expression for 'glorious excellency.' Deissmann, p. 95 f., takes 'virtue' as 'manifestation of power' almost = 'miracle.'

hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yea, and for this very cause 5
adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply

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4. whereby: through the 'glory and virtue.' The manifestation of the Divine nature is an appeal to man because it is a promise of grace and blessing to those who trust themselves to God.

granted unto us . . . that . . . ye may become. The 'us' has been variously explained, as in verse 1; but the change of person is quite simply and satisfactorily explained by the transition from general reflection to direct exhortation.

through these: the promises which win us to the new life in Christ, and are realized in that life, here and hereafter.

the (marg. 'a') **divine nature:** parallel to 'his divine power' in the previous verse, which see. The writer is not thinking of any metaphysical change in human nature, but of the practical participation in the life of Christ, through his indwelling spirit, more especially of participation in God's holiness as opposed to the 'corruption of the world.'

corruption (*phthora*): five times in Paul's Epistles, four times in 2 Peter, nowhere else in the N. T. The root idea of decomposition suggests the loathsomeness and the wasting away of decaying organisms. In the N. T. 'corruption' carries with it both a literal and a figurative sense, and contrasts with the purity and permanence of Divine life. When we are won for God we are delivered from the influences which tend to corruption.

lust (*epithumia*). See on Jas. i. 14.

5. for this very cause: since God has done all that is necessary on His part for your salvation, and what still remains is in your power, and depends entirely on yourselves.

in your faith. 'In': each quality is a kind of soil or atmosphere in which its successor is nourished; 'faith' is the starting-point of all. 'Your faith': this they already possessed. The Epistle is addressed to 'them that have obtained . . . faith' (verse 1). 'Faith' here is certainly the attitude of the soul towards Christ.

supply (*epichorēgein*): a word used twice in this Epistle, and, together with the corresponding noun, five times in the Pauline Epistles. It contrasts with the 'grant' (*dorein*) of verses 3 and 4. God bestows free gifts; we have to acquire, to supply ourselves with the means of utilizing these gifts at the expense of toil and sacrifice.

6 virtue; and in *your* virtue knowledge; and in *your* knowledge temperance; and in *your* temperance patience; 7 and in *your* patience godliness; and in *your* godliness love of the brethren; and in *your* love of the brethren

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virtue (*arete*) may here have its ordinary classical meaning of moral excellence, possibly coloured with its LXX meaning of 'praiseworthiness.' It is the idea of Jas. ii. 26, 'Faith apart from works is dead.' Faith's true sequel is the active zeal which wins approval from God and justifies faith before men.

The 'yours' supplied by the R. V. in italics in this and the following verses are better omitted. The original distinguishes between 'your faith' actually possessed and 'virtue,' &c., which doubtless they had in some measure, but yet needed to supply themselves with more completely. The latter is the point emphasized.

knowledge: the simple word *gnōsis*; the word for complete knowledge, *epignōsis*, is always used in this Epistle of the knowledge given by God or Christ. Yet Revelation did not render human learning unnecessary. The Epistle exhorts its readers to supply themselves with knowledge through the effort of learning. Probably 'knowledge' here chiefly refers to practical matters.

6. temperance (*enkrateia*): *lit.* 'the power of holding oneself in'; i. e. self-control.

patience (*hupomone*): rather, 'endurance.' 'Self-control' curbs the evil impulses of a man's own nature; 'endurance' enables him to resist the pressure of external circumstances. For 'godliness' see verse 3.

7. love of the brethren. This virtue is also emphasized in 1 Pet. i. 22, iii. 8.

In this list of the fruits of faith we have first the active gifts, virtue and knowledge; then the passive qualities of self-control and endurance; then the attitude towards God, godliness, towards the church, love of the brethren, and finally towards God and all mankind, love.

8. The condition of progress in religious knowledge, of receiving new light from God, is the strenuous exercise of all the graces both in the inner life and in relation to God and man. So John vii. 17, 'If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself;' and Col. i. 10, 'Bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge (*epignōsis*) of God.' The writer of our Epistle is specially anxious that his readers should have a right understanding of Christian truth, and for the time being chiefly thinks of the various Christian virtues as ministering to this end.

love. For if these things are yours and abound, they 8
make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge
of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacketh these 9
things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten
the cleansing from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, 10
give the more diligence to make your calling and election
sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble:
for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance 11

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9. these things: the Christian graces and the consequent right understanding of Divine things.

seeing only what is near. The Greek word[1] (only here in the N. T.) should mean, according to the usage in classical Greek, 'shortsighted.' If so translated it must qualify 'blind,' i. e. so far blind as to be shortsighted. According to the literal derivation, it might mean 'closing the eyes' (so R. V. marg.), i. e. blind through one's own deliberate act.

having forgotten. The exercise of the Christian virtues leads to further enlightenment; but the neglect of them makes men blind to Divine truth, and blots out all recollection of spiritual experience.

the cleansing from his old sins: i. e. the pardon and purification with which his Christian life began.

10. Wherefore: in view of what is gained by diligence and lost by neglect.

to make your calling and election sure. According to Matt. xxii. 14, 'Many are called, but few elected (chosen)'; but probably here the two terms are used synonymously, and are combined in an emphatic compound phrase. The Divine election is only realized through man's persistent practical response to God's call to service as well as fellowship. The writer has not in view the abstract doctrine of election, but the practical working of man's relation to God in the Christian dispensation.

these things: as in verse 9.

ye shall never stumble. The consistent effort to develop the virtues enumerated in verses 5–7 would involve a life free from faults and failings.

11. supplied: as in verse 5. If we seek at all costs to equip ourselves with the Christian virtues, God will spare no expense, so to speak, to perfect our lives and crown them with blessing. There is perhaps a reference to the classical sense of the word, 'to pay the expenses of a chorus at the public games.'

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[1] μυωπάζειν.

into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus
Christ.

12 Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and
13 are established in the truth which is with *you*. And I
think it right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir
14 you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that
the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as
15 our Lord Jesus Christ signified unto me. Yea, I will

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the entrance into the eternal kingdom. Cf. Dan. iv. 3. The 'kingdom' was the new dispensation, here still regarded as future. It is a spiritual state, into which there may be, in a measure, an entrance in this life, although the full realization will be hereafter. The writer of the Epistle probably was not certain whether the kingdom would come in this world or the next.

i. 12–15. *Reminiscences.*

Peter's anxiety to confirm his readers in their knowledge of the facts and principles of Christianity.

12. Wherefore: as in verse 10, with further reference to the 'entrance' in verse 11.

these things: the truths stated in verses 3–11.

though ye know them. Unless they constantly called to mind, or were reminded of the truths they knew and took for granted, these truths would have no practical effect on their lives.

the truth: the Christian faith.

13. tabernacle (*skēnōma*): 'tent,' the body. So 2 Cor. v. 1, 'The earthly house of our tabernacle' (*skēnos*); and John i. 14, 'The Word . . . tabernacled (*eskēnōsen*) among us.' The word suggests the frailty and transience of the body.

stir you up[1]: an emphatic word, 'rouse you thoroughly.'

14. swiftly: sometimes taken to mean 'soon,' and to imply that Peter is thought of as writing in his old age; but it probably means 'suddenly,' without warning. Peter did not know when he might die, therefore it was 'right,' verse 13, for him to use every possible opportunity of exhorting the brethren; hence he was justified in writing this letter.

our Lord Jesus Christ signified: i. e. in John xxi. 18, 19, 'When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

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[1] *διεγείρειν.*

give diligence that at every time ye may be able after my decease to call these things to remembrance. For we 16 did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord

Now this he spake signifying[1] by what manner of death he should glorify God.' A martyr's death would come suddenly, whereas an old man would look forward to dying soon.

15. at every time. The reference is to the present letter, which they could keep by them and refer to at any time.

decease (*exodos*): the word used in the account of the Transfiguration, Luke ix. 30, 31, 'Moses and Elijah . . . spake of his decease.'

i. 16–18. *The Transfiguration.*

The apostles' authority as eye-witnesses of the Transfiguration.

16. we: not editorial, meaning merely Peter, but including the other apostles, especially John, who was also present at the Transfiguration; James, the third witness of that event, died long before the gospel was preached in Asia Minor, p. 68.

cunningly devised fables. The Pastoral Epistles warn their readers against 'fables' (*muthoi*, 'myths'); 1 Tim. i. 4, iv. 7, 'profane and old wives' fables'; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Titus i. 14, 'Jewish fables.' The opposition, so to speak, had tried to turn the tables upon the legitimate authorities of the church, and alleged that their teaching had no better foundation than 'fables,' and that these 'fables' were not the innocent growth of popular imagination, but had been 'cunningly devised,' i. e. deliberately invented as means of obtaining money and influence. The apostles, according to this charge, had, by sheer falsehood and in their own interests, constructed the doctrines of the power of the risen Christ and his second coming, and had perhaps even concocted the gospel narratives. Curiously enough, the word translated 'cunningly devise' (*sophizein*) only occurs elsewhere in the N. T. in one passage in the sense of 'make wise,' 2 Tim. iii. 15, 'The sacred writings which are able to *make thee wise* unto salvation.'

power: the 'Divine power' which 'hath granted us all things that pertain unto life and godliness,' i. 3.

coming (*parousia*): the technical term for the looked-for reappearance of Jesus on earth, see on Jas. v. 7, 8. The early church had expected this *parousia* speedily, and many had understood that the apostles promised the *parousia* in the near future. To them, therefore, the failure of this supposed promise dis-

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[1] The Greek words for 'signify' are different in the two passages.

Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.
17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:

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credited the apostolic teaching, both as to any *parousia* at all, and with regard to everything else.

eyewitnesses of his majesty. The reply was that 'the power and coming' of Christ were guaranteed by his 'majesty'; the manifestation of his greatness, that is to say by the beauty and power of his life and teaching, by his miracles, and above all by the Transfiguration. The authority of the apostles rested on the fact that they had been eyewitnesses of all these things, especially of the last named. The word for 'majesty' (*megaleiotēs*, 'greatness') only occurs elsewhere in the N. T. in Acts xix. 27, the 'magnificence' of Diana, and at the close of the narrative of the healing of the demoniac after the Transfiguration, Luke ix. 43, 'They were all astonished at the majesty of God.' Possibly the writer in 2 Peter is simply thinking of the Transfiguration, but the principle, that the saving power of Christ is guaranteed by what men saw and heard of him, obviously applies to all his earthly life.

'Eyewitness[1]' sometimes means in classical Greek 'one initiated into the innermost secrets of the Eleusinian mysteries,' the word here may imply 'We are in the best possible position for knowing the exact truth about everything in the life of Christ.' It more probably means 'eyewitness' in a perfectly general sense. The word occurs only here in the N. T., but the corresponding verb is used in 1 Pet. ii. 12, iii. 2, in a general sense, of the heathen 'beholding' the consistent lives of believers.

17. honour and glory: an expression not of two distinct ideas, but of a single idea, emphasized by the use of two synonyms.

such a voice: i. e. an utterance as follows, 'This is my,' &c.; perhaps even = of the wonderful character shewn by the following words.

from: *lit.* uttered by.

excellent glory: a periphrasis for 'God' like the 'Majesty on high' (Heb. i. 3), 'Excellent' (*megaloprepēs*), *lit.* 'befitting a great man.' Thus the phrase includes the ideas of 'majesty' and 'glory,' and suggests that the 'majesty' and 'glory' of Christ corresponded to those of the Father, from whom they were derived.

This is my beloved Son, &c. The utterance is given here as in Matt. xvii. 5, with the omission of the concluding clause, 'Hear ye him,' and two or three slight verbal changes. Mark

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[1] *ἐπόπτης.*

and this voice we *ourselves* heard come out of heaven, 18
when we were with him in the holy mount. And we 19

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ix. 7 and some MSS. of Luke ix. 35 have 'This is my beloved Son: hear ye him,' but in Luke R. V. reads 'This is my Son, my chosen, hear ye him.' The utterance at the Baptism is given, Matt. iii. 17; Mark i. 11; Luke iii. 22, as 'Thou art' (Matthew, 'This is') 'my beloved Son; in thee' (Matthew, 'whom') 'I am well pleased.'

18. we ourselves. The R. V. adds '*ourselves*' to express the marked emphasis which the Greek idiom lays upon the 'we.' 'We' is not used loosely of a number of people who might be said to have heard through what actually came to the ears of some of their number.

out of heaven: in the Synoptics 'out of the cloud.'

the holy mount. Matthew and Mark tells us that on the occasion of the Transfiguration Christ took the three up into a high mountain apart by themselves. Luke says that he took them with him, and went up into the mountain to pray. The mount was 'holy' because the Transfiguration took place upon it.

The similarities between this paragraph and the Synoptics do not prove that the author was acquainted with those documents. All the information implied here might have been obtained from oral tradition, or from written sources of our Gospels. On the other hand, the slight differences do not shew that the writer was not acquainted with one or more of the Synoptics. He certainly assumes that his readers were familiar with the narrative of the Transfiguration. The language of the paragraph affords no strong evidence either for or against the Petrine authorship. It is not quite clear why the Transfiguration is singled out as the one occasion on which Christ 'received honour and glory from God.' Outside of the Synoptic Gospels this is the only reference the N. T. makes to that event. Elsewhere the appeal is chiefly to the Resurrection, e. g. Rom. i. 4, 'Declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead.' But, after the earliest period of the church, the distinction of having been an eyewitness of the Transfiguration was almost peculiar to Peter; he shared it only with John. Paul obviously could make no claim to it, while he considered that the vision near Damascus made him an eyewitness of the Resurrection. It was natural that an Epistle written by Peter, or in his name, should cite this special distinction in support of his authority. The Transfiguration, too, might well be understood as a manifestation of Christ's Divine majesty, and as foreshadowing and assuring his second coming in the glory of the Father.

i. 19-21. *Prophecy.*

The Transfiguration confirmed the apostles in their faith in

have the word of prophecy *made* more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your
20 hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture
21 is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came

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the promises and predictions of the O. T. These, therefore, may be confidently appealed to in support of apostolic teaching, if only their Divine source is recognized, and they are interpreted under the guidance of the Divine spirit, and not according to individual interest and prejudice.

19. we: either Christians generally, or the eyewitnesses of the Transfiguration. Cf. on verses 1 and 4.

the word of prophecy: the O. T.

made **more sure:** i. e. by the Transfiguration. The glorification of Christ on that occasion, regarded as a partial fulfilment of O. T. sayings concerning the Messiah, made the apostles more certain that they would be completely fulfilled by the second coming.

The A. V., 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy,' represents an alternative view of the passage, i. e. We have also in the written word, the O. T., a witness to the truth of our teaching which is even surer than the evidence afforded by the Transfiguration, inasmuch as that event was only witnessed by ourselves, and the Scriptures are open to all, and their authority is universally accepted, especially by the Jews.

a lamp . . . in a dark place. An equivalent phrase is used of the prophet Ezra in II (IV) Esdras xii. 42. A lamp can only imperfectly illuminate a limited space for a few people, so the O. T. was an elementary revelation given to a single race. The word for 'dark' (*auchmēros*) is rare and late; it only occurs here in the N. T.; its literal meaning is 'squalid.' 'The dark place' is the world, so far as it lacks Divine light.

the day: the coming of Christ.

the day-star (*phōsphoros*). Only here in the N. T.; usually the planet Venus. The day-star arising in our hearts will be the inner premonitions which announce the coming, as the day-star heralds the dawn; such premonitions might be occasioned by observing the various 'signs' of the coming.

20. prophecy of scripture: i. e. contained in the O. T., 'the word of prophecy.'

private (*idias,* R. V. marg., 'special') **interpretation.** The interpretation of Scripture is not to be controlled by the caprice of individuals, but by general principles of exegesis under the guidance of the Spirit. The clause is directed against the by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost.

But there arose false prophets also among the people, 2

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mistaken use of Scripture by the false teachers dealt with in the next chapter. The same idea is variously expressed now-a-days, e.g.: The individual Christian should submit his interpretation of the Bible to the judgement of the church; or, more accurately, In forming his opinion on such matters, the individual should take into account the opinions and experience of his fellow Christians, and the general results of Biblical study.

Another explanation is: No prophecy is its own interpretation, but can only be understood by its fulfilment.

Slight alterations of reading, e.g. *epēluseos* (approach, origin), for *epiluseos* (interpretation), have been proposed, in order to obtain the meaning, 'No prophecy has its source in an individual, but in God.' This would be simpler, and would connect more easily with the following verse.

21. no prophecy . . . came by the will of man: but men spake from God, . . . moved by the Holy Ghost. A man could not produce a prophecy because he wished to do so, by the mere exercise of such powers—observation, foresight, reasoning, imagination—as his own will could set in motion; there must be also the suggestion and illumination of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the author implies, man cannot understand the Scriptures without the aid of the same Spirit.

The best authorities, MSS., &c., are divided between 'holy men of God spake' and 'men spake from God.'

This paragraph is obscure in the original, and there is much controversy as to its exact interpretation.

ii. 1–3. *The false teachers.*

The O. T. has not only foretold the coming and glory of Christ, and the blessedness of his people, but also affords examples of false teachers who led away many of the chosen race. These examples are a warning that similar trials will befall the church. Cf. Jude 4.

2 Pet. ii. 1—iii. 3 is based on Jude 4–18; cf. synopsis in Introduction to 2 Peter, pp. 58 ff.

1. false prophets. Cf. the numerous passages in which the canonical prophets denounce the bulk of the prophetic order as false teachers, who nevertheless were followed by the people generally; see especially 1 Kings xxii; Jer. xxiii; Ezek. xiii; Amos vii. 14; Zech. xiii. 2–6. The 'false prophets' falsely professed to be prophets, and so the 'false teachers' falsely claimed to be inspired teachers.

as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves
2 swift destruction. And many shall follow their lascivious doings; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be
3 evil spoken of. And in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose sentence now from of old lingereth not, and their destruction

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there shall be. Verses 9 ff. shew that there were already false teachers in the churches. Here, however, a general principle is laid down; the analogy of the past shews that there always will be false teachers: cf. on iii. 3.

heresies: R. V. marg., 'sects'; *haireseis*, usually in the N. T. = 'sects,' Acts xxiv. 5, 'the sect of the Nazarenes'; here perhaps 'doctrinal errors.' The rest of the chapter shews that these errors were not concerned with abstract dogma, but with practical Antinomian teaching, i. e. the contention that Christian teaching justified lax morality.

denying even the Master. See on Jude 4. Where, as here, our author reproduced Jude verbally, he used the main idea of the original, and connected that with his own treatment of his subject, but in the case of some details of language he may not have thought out or indicated their special meaning in the new context. Such details are given simply as part of the quotation.

that bought them. Cf. 1 Cor. vi. 20, vii. 23, 'Ye were bought with a price'; and 1 Pet. i. 18, 19, 'Ye were redeemed . . . with precious blood . . . even the blood of Christ.'

2. lascivious doings (*aselgeiais*). See on 1 Pet. iv. 3. The A. V., 'pernicious ways,' is a doubtful translation of a badly supported reading, *apōleiais*.

way of the truth. 'Way' is used as a kind of technical term for the Christian faith and life in Acts ix. 2, xix. 9, &c.

3. feigned (*plastois*) **words,** *lit.* 'moulded,' 'fabricated,' false professions of zeal and disinterestedness, and false claims to speak with inspired authority, 'cunningly devised fables,' such as our author repudiates in i. 16.

make merchandise of you. Cf. on 'Shepherds that . . . feed themselves' (Jude 12).

sentence . . . from of old. See on Jude 4, here simplified.

lingereth not, . . . slumbereth not. Sentence and doom are personified; they had not yet overtaken their victims, but they were hot-foot on their track.

slumbereth not. For if God spared not angels when 4
they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed
them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgement;

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ii. 4–10ª. *Their doom.*

The certainty of the punishment of the false teachers and the deliverance of the faithful shewn from the fate of the fallen angels, the antediluvians, and Sodom and Gomorrah; and the escape of Noah and Lot.

4–9. (See on Jude 6.) **If God spared not . . . the Lord knoweth how,** &c. God's past dealings are a revelation of His power, wisdom, and righteousness; and as these are permanent, history, properly understood, shews us how He will act in days to come.

4. This verse is simplified from Jude 6.

sinned: referring to Gen. vi. 1 and the legends connected with it.

cast them down to hell: the translation of a single word, *tartarōsas*, 'Tartarus-ed,' only used here in the N. T., and very rarely elsewhere. Tartarus is properly the name for the deepest abyss, far below Hades, but comes to be used sometimes as a synonym for Hades. Tartarus figures in the classical counterpart of the legend of the Fall of the Angels; the Titans who rebelled against the gods were cast into Tartarus. It is possible that the parallel may have suggested the use of the word here; but it is more probably intended as an equivalent for *aidiois*, understood as 'of Hades,' in Jude 6 (which see). Tartarus is never referred to elsewhere in the N. T., but the word is used in the LXX of Job xli. 31, but apparently through an error of the translators. *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*[1] makes Enoch say, 'The men . . . shewed me the darkness, and there I saw the prisoners [the angels] suspended, reserved for (and) awaiting the eternal judgment.'

R. V. marg. hast 'cast them into dungeons,' understanding the allusion to Tartarus as figurative.

pits of darkness. The best authorities are divided here between 'pits' (*sirois* or *seirois*) and 'chains' (*seirais*); the best MSS. have 'pits,' most versions 'chains,' both can be illustrated from the apocryphal accounts of the fallen angels. Neither word occurs elsewhere in the N. T., but *seira* (chain) is found three times in the LXX. Jude 6 has 'bonds' (*desmois*).

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[1] Chap. vii. 1. Rev. R. H. Charles, the editor of the English translation, connects this with our passage, which it resembles rather more closely than it does Jude 6.

5 and spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah
with seven others, a preacher of righteousness, when he
6 brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; and
turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes
condemned them with an overthrow, having made them
7 an example unto those that should live ungodly; and
delivered righteous Lot, sore distressed by the lascivious
8 life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among
them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul

5. (No parallel in Jude.) Apparently added to bring in the idea that though ruin overtakes sinners, the righteous are delivered; similarly, our Epistle follows Jude in speaking of Sodom and Gomorrah, but adds the deliverance of Lot, which Jude does not mention.

a preacher of righteousness. Genesis does not mention this, but it might reasonably be inferred from the fact that Noah was a righteous man in the midst of an evil generation. Accordingly Josephus[1] tells us that Noah tried to persuade his contemporaries to mend their ways.

6. (See on Jude 7.) **the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah:** may mean simply Sodom and Gomorrah, or may be meant to include the neighbouring towns, as in Jude.

with an overthrow. 'Overthrow' (*katastrophē*) is almost a technical term in the LXX for the destruction of these cities. The translation here should rather be 'to an overthrow'; the cities were reduced to ashes, and condemned to perpetual ruin. The phrase is omitted by some of the best MSS.

example. The fate of these cities is constantly cited as an example of Divine justice, Isa. i. 9; Matt. x. 15. 'It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah,' &c. (xi. 23; Rom. ix. 29).

7. Verses 7-9 have no parallel in Jude; cf. on verse 5.

Wisd. of Sol. x. 6-9 cites the example of Sodom and Gomorrah, and says of Lot, 'While the ungodly were perishing, wisdom delivered a righteous man.'

wicked (*athesmōn*): *lit.* 'not submitting to law.' In the N. T. only here and iii. 17; in the latter passage of the false teachers.

8. that righteous man. The Vatican MS. omits 'that'; its text would mean 'he, because he was righteous.'

vexed: *lit.* 'tortured.'

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[1] *Antiquities*, I. iii. 1.

from day to day with *their* lawless deeds): the Lord 9
knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and
to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the
day of judgement; but chiefly them that walk after the 10
flesh in the lust of defilement, and despise dominion.

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from day to day. Not expressly stated in Gen. xix, but a natural conclusion from that narrative.

9. the Lord knoweth. Verse 9 is the apodosis or second half of the conditional sentence of which the whole of verses 4–8 constitute the protasis or first half. Perhaps, however, by the time the author reached the end of verse 8, he had forgotten all about the 'if' in verse 4; and so, supposing he had finished a complete sentence, began afresh in verse 9.

godly. See on 'godliness,' i. 3.

temptation. See on Jas. i. 2; according to some MSS. 'temptations,' as A. V. Noah and Lot might be tempted by the example and solicitation of their neighbours, just as the Christians were by false teachers; but the context cites cases where righteous men were delivered from the troubles in which they were involved through their neighbours' sins. Perhaps, therefore, we should take *peirasmos* here, as in 1 Pet. i. 6, in the sense of 'trial.'

under punishment. Punishment is not wholly postponed to a future judgement, but begins with, and continues from, the commission of sin. The rendering of the A. V. 'to be punished' is not probable. In the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, vii. 1, it is said that the imprisoned angels were 'continually tortured.'

the day of judgement. This phrase represents the O. T. 'Day of Jehovah,' the decisive crisis at which God manifests Himself to vindicate righteousness. In the N. T. this 'day' is associated with the second coming of Christ to judge the world. Our passage is usually understood to mean that the wicked already suffer for sin, but that the full measure of their punishment will be inflicted hereafter. It has also been held that the use of the term 'judgement' implies that their fate is not yet fixed, and that the future 'day' may bring deliverance to some now 'kept under punishment.'

10^a. (See on Jude 8^a.) **but chiefly them,** &c. A direct application to the false teachers attacked by this Epistle (cf. verses 1, 2).

walk after the flesh. So the fallen angels and the men of Sodom and Gomorrah.

despise dominion. The angels rebelled against God; the antediluvians turned a deaf ear to Noah; and the men of Sodom

Daring, selfwilled, they tremble not to rail at dignities:
11 whereas angels, though greater in might and power, bring
not a railing judgement against them before the Lord.
12 But these, as creatures without reason, born mere animals
to be taken and destroyed, railing in matters whereof
they are ignorant, shall in their destroying surely be
13 destroyed, suffering wrong as the hire of wrong-doing;

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would not listen to Lot or the angels. For 'dominion' see on Jude 8.

ii. 10^{b}–16. *Their character and conduct.*

Description of the false teachers—as truculent, abusive, debauched, rushing blindly to destruction, involving others in sin and ruin, and going astray through greed of gain, like Balaam.

10^{b}. See on Jude 8^{b}.

11. See also on Jude 9, of which this is a generalization.

greater . . . against them. 'Them' is ambiguous; apparently heavenly 'dignities.' Our Epistle replaces the special case of Michael and the devil by a general principle—when good angels withstand 'dignities,' i. e. evil angels, although the good angels are the more powerful, they do not abuse their opponents. The moral is—How absurd and wicked it is for *evil* men to abuse *good* angels, or perhaps even the legitimate church authorities.

before the Lord. Omitted by some MSS., &c.

12. See also on Jude 10, to which this verse is substantially equivalent.

born mere animals to be taken and destroyed. A development of the 'animally'; R. V. 'naturally' in Jude 10. As animals are trapped through their eagerness to satisfy their appetite, so self-indulgence betrayed these men to their ruin. Alternative renderings are—'Born with a natural tendency to be,' &c.; or, 'Born with a natural inclination to take and destroy.'

in their destroying: i. e. apparently 'while they are engaged in destroying the peace, faith, and morals of the church'; R. V. marg., 'in their corruption.' But it should probably be translated 'in their destruction,' i. e. that of the animals, referring to the phrase 'born mere animals.'

13^{a}. (No exact parallel in Jude.) **suffering wrong as the hire of wrong-doing.** The R. V. imitates a play upon words in the Greek—*adikoumenoi*, 'suffering wrong'; *adikia*, 'wrong-doing.' The natural meaning of the R. V. as English is—Having done wrong to others, deceived, cheated, robbed, they incur the retribution of being similarly wronged themselves. But this can scarcely be the meaning of the Greek; the whole context is *men* that count it pleasure to revel in the day-time, spots and blemishes, revelling in their love-feasts while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that 14

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concerned with the total ruin of these men by Divine punishment, and there is nothing to lead up to the special and limited idea of the suffering of sinners at the hands of fellow sinners. Again, in verse 15, 'the hire of wrong-doing' means the gratification and advantage which men hope to attain from sin. Hence we should rather translate 'being defrauded of the hire,' &c., i. e. sin promises pleasures, which its votaries fail to obtain.

Another reading is, 'being about to receive the hire,' &c., 'hire' being used sarcastically; they sinned for hire, with a view to pleasure, and will receive hire, but it will be destruction. Cf. Rom. vi. 23, 'The wages of sin is death.' The MSS., &c., are divided between the two readings, and neither gives a very good sense. Perhaps neither is the original text, which may have been quite lost.

The following lines explain the 'hire,' viz. luxurious living, 13; the gratification of lust, 14; and wealth, 15.

men **that count it pleasure to revel in the day-time.** For 'pleasure' (*hedonē*) see on Jas. iv. 1. 'In the day-time' (*en hēmera*) has been taken to mean (1) 'day after day,' a continual round of selfish and gross enjoyment; (2) in the day-time as distinguished from the night; (3) 'for a day,' i. e. only in this present earthly life; they had no idea of any pleasure in anything beyond mere earthly luxury, as we say 'mere ephemeral pleasures.' Still, it seems doubtful whether the Greek can mean (1) or even (3), and (2) seems to give a poor sense. Possibly *en hēmera* may mean (4) 'in a day of judgement,' i. e. in a great crisis of the history of the church and the world they were merely occupied with sensual pleasures. Cf. Jas. v. 5, 'Ye have lived delicately on the earth, and taken your pleasure; ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter.' The verb for 'lived delicately' (*etruphēsate*) is cognate to the noun *truphē*, translated 'to revel.' In considering (1), (3), (4), it must be remembered that the Greek of this Epistle is very peculiar.

13^{b}. See on Jude 12^{a}.

love-feasts (*agapais*). The Vatican MS. and some other authorities read 'deceivings' (*apatais*), i. e. 'delusions' as to the advantage of sin, delusions held by the false teachers, and caused by them in others. It is uncertain which reading is original; either makes good sense.

14. (No parallel in Jude.)

adultery: *lit.* 'adulteress' according to some of the best MSS., others read 'adultery.'

cannot cease from sin; enticing unstedfast souls; having
a heart exercised in covetousness; children of cursing;
15 forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed
the way of Balaam the *son* of Beor, who loved the hire
16 of wrong-doing; but he was rebuked for his own trans-
gression: a dumb ass spake with man's voice and stayed
17 the madness of the prophet. These are springs without
water, and mists driven by a storm; for whom the
18 blackness of darkness hath been reserved. For, uttering
great swelling *words* of vanity, they entice in the lusts of
the flesh, by lasciviousness, those who are just escaping

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children of cursing: worthily accursed. Cf. Eph. ii. 3, 'children of wrath'; and 2 Thess. ii. 3, 'son of perdition.' This judgement sums up verses 13, 14.

15, 16. In these verses our Epistle expands one of the three O. T. examples of error dealt with in Jude 11, which see. For the story of Balaam see Num. xxii, xxiii, xxxi. 8, 16.

ii. 17–19. *Their bad influence.*

These false teachers will be punished most especially because they seduce into sharing their wickedness and ruin those who are escaping from sin.

17. See on Jude 13; after which there follows in Jude 14, 15, the quotation from the *Book of Enoch*, omitted here, probably on account of its apocryphal character.

18^a. (See on Jude 16^b.) **For, uttering great swelling** words **of vanity.** In Jude this is merely one amongst other objectionable traits of the characters depicted; here bluster is one of the means by which they delude their dupes.

At this point the former and longer of the two sections dependent on Jude closes, and the remainder of the chapter has no exact parallel in that Epistle.

18^b. in the lusts of the flesh, by lasciviousness. The example of their own self-indulgence, combined with the specious sophistries and brazen impudence by which it was justified, appealed to the latent passions of their victims.

just (*oligôs*): *lit.* 'a little,' i. e. either 'recently,' or 'a little way,' or 'in small measure'; a rare word, only occurring here in the N. T. Some MSS. have *ontōs*, 'actually, really'; A. V. 'clean.'

who are just escaping. These are the 'unstedfast souls' of verse 14, recent converts too little disciplined in the Christian life to resist alluring temptations, backed up by arguments too

from them that live in error; promising them liberty, 19
while they themselves are bondservants of corruption; for
of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he also brought
into bondage. For if, after they have escaped the defile- 20

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specious to be refuted from their limited knowledge and experience. No doubt one reason why the Epistle was written was derived from the actual perversion of such 'babes in Christ.' The author is naturally moved to hot indignation by the cowardly and selfish treachery of those professed to be Christian teachers. Cf. our Lord's saying (Matt. xviii. 6), 'Whoso shall cause one of these little ones which believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.'

them that live in error. The 'error' of the false teachers is spoken of in ii. 15, iii. 17; but the phrase here cannot denote them, but rather the heathen to whom those 'just escaping' had recently belonged.

19. of whom a man is overcome. The R. V. marg. 'of what' is preferable, the reference being to the evil desires which mastered the false teachers.

ii. 20-22. *The doom of backsliders.*

The disastrous consequences of falling from grace.

20-22. It is a matter of controversy whether these verses refer to the false teachers or to the recent converts whom they had led astray.

In favour of referring them to the false teachers, we have the following points: (*a*) They would form a natural climax of the description of the guilt and doom of those teachers. (*b*) As it is the teachers who are 'overcome' in verse 19, 'overcome' in 20 will probably refer to the same persons. (*c*) If the verses are referred to converts who had been deceived and betrayed through weakness and inexperience, they seem unduly harsh.

In favour of referring the verses to the recent converts, we have: (*a*) Those who, in verse 20, are entangled in defilements after they have escaped are naturally identified with those who, in verse 19, are enticed by lust when they are just escaping. In answer to this, it is said that the same persons would not be spoken of in two consecutive verses as 'just escaping' and 'having escaped.' Yet these varying expressions might denote the same state looked at from different points of view. Because their conversion was recent, they were 'just escaping'; but they might also be thought of as 'having escaped,' because conversion in the N. T. is commonly described as a single complete act. (*b*) If these verses are referred to the teachers, they involve a recognition of their having

ments of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with
21 them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered

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once attained to full Christian status. Such recognition is not found elsewhere in the Epistle, unless it be in ii. 1, and would have been definitely stated and not merely implied if it had been in the writer's mind. (*c*) The utter and hopeless ruin which these teachers brought upon their misguided disciples would be a very effective climax; it would bring out most clearly the pernicious character of the teaching, and would be an impressive appeal to any of the readers who were likely to be led astray.

The weight of authority supports the reference to the teachers.

20. For: either explaining the previous clause; or, perhaps, resuming the 'for' in verse 18, and giving an additional reason for the punishment of the false teachers, viz. the irretrievable nature of the harm done by them to their disciples.

world. See on Jas. i. 27.

knowledge of. See on i. 2. Moral reform is, on one side, a matter of enlightenment, of opening the eyes to a higher standard of conduct, and to the beauty of noble lives, above all others that of Christ.

the last state, &c. Similarly, our Lord said of the man from whom an evil spirit departed, but afterwards returned with seven others worse than himself, 'The last state of that man becometh worse than the first' (Matt. xii. 43-45).

21. it were better, &c. Had they never known the gospel, there would have been some hope that its influence might have reached and saved them; but now it has been tried and failed, and there is no more effective means of salvation. So Heb. vi. 4-6, 'As touching those who were once enlightened . . . it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance'; and Heb. x. 26, 'If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins.'

known . . . knowing: the verb *epignōskein* corresponding to the noun *epignōsis* for 'knowledge.'

commandment (*entolē*): a single ordinance, as distinguished from *nomos*, 'law,' a legislative system. It is noteworthy that here, as in iii. 2 and 1 Tim. vi. 14, the whole ethical aspect of Christianity is spoken of as a 'commandment.' Such a usage is consistent with the fact that, whereas the Mosaic law consisted of a multitude of unto them. It has happened unto them according to 22 the true proverb, The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire.

This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write 3

'commandments' as to details of conduct, Christianity lays down a few comprehensive principles.

delivered unto them. Cf. Jude 3, 'The faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.'

22. The dog, &c. Prov. xxvi. 11, 'As a dog that returneth to his vomit, so is a fool that repeateth his folly.' The 'fool' in such O. T. passages is usually understood to be wilfully and therefore wickedly foolish. It is quite possible, however, that both this and the following proverb were immediately derived from current sayings.

the sow, &c. There is no scriptural parallel to this saying[1]. The point of these two proverbs is that the sins to which the renegades had returned were utterly loathsome, and that their fall from grace shewed that the inclination to such sins was ingrained in their very nature, like the canine or swinish predilection for filth. These truths are quite sufficient to justify the use of the illustrations; they cannot be pressed further without going beyond what was in the author's mind, and thus raising irrelevant difficulties.

iii. 1–4. *Motive for writing.*

The author has been moved to write this—his second letter to his readers—to remind them of the teaching of the prophets and apostles, and especially of their warnings that, after the first period of the church's history was ended, men would arise who would laugh at the idea of any second coming, and justify sinful self-indulgence by the long delay of the Lord.

1–3. We have here a second shorter section of our Epistle in which the author has worked up and supplemented material from Jude (cf. Jude 17, 18).

1. In its phraseology and formality this verse reads rather like the opening of an epistle. Hence it has been supposed that chap. iii. is a separate epistle combined by mistake with i. and ii. But this verse is, in reality, an emphatic resumption of i. 12, 13, intended to lay special stress on the explanation of the appearance of the false teachers.

now[2] (already): can hardly be rhetorical; is sometimes

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[1] Cf. a saying in Heraclitus, *Hühn*, p. 135.

[2] ἤδη.

unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere
2 mind by putting you in remembrance; that ye should
remember the words which were spoken before by the
holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and
3 Saviour through your apostles: knowing this first, that in

explained 'at my (Peter's) advanced age.' It perhaps means 'within a short time.'

second. 1 Peter being the first; cf. Introduction, p. 36.

stir up, &c.: repeating i. 12, 13.

sincere (*eilikrinēs*). Elsewhere in the N.T. only Phil. i. 10, 'That ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ'; it is used in Wisd. of Sol. vii. 25 (R.V. 'clear'), 'She (Wisdom) is . . . a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty.' The corresponding noun occurs only in 1 Cor. v. 8, 'the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth'; 2 Cor. i. 12, 'in holiness and sincerity of God . . . we behaved ourselves'; ii. 17, 'as of sincerity . . . as of God, in the sight of God.' Lightfoot on Phil. i. 10 says of the word, 'signifies properly "distinct, unmixed," and hence "pure, unsullied."'

mind[1]: the active, practical intellect. While the judgement of the false teachers was vitiated by self-indulgence and self-interest, faithful believers had their minds clear of any such distracting influences; they were 'single-minded.' If they exercised their moral faculty they would decide rightly; the only danger lay in their being overawed by the apparent authority of the false teachers; hence the writer 'stirs up their sincere mind.'

2. (See on Jude 17, and Introduction, pp. 60 f.) Here, as elsewhere, our Epistle generalizes what in Jude is particular. In Jude the readers are exhorted to remember a particular utterance; here their attention is first called to the whole O. and N.T. revelation, and Jude's special point is introduced separately in the next verse. The O. T. passages and the sayings of Christ and the apostles which our author has in mind are chiefly those which were applied to the second coming of Christ.

commandment. See on ii. 21.

your apostles: the apostles through whom they received the teaching of Christ. A.V. 'of us the apostles' is a doubtful rendering of an incorrect reading.

3. (See on Jude 18.) **knowing this first, that.** The same phrase is used in i. 20. The fact mentioned in this verse was to be specially borne in mind, because it met the crucial difficulty of the hour, the appearance of the false teachers.

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[1] *διάνοια.*

the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise 4 of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they wilfully forget, that 5

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the last days: the time in which the author is writing.

mockers: the false teachers.

shall come. See on ii. 1. If the Epistle was not written by Peter, the author sometimes writes as in Peter's time, when the situation of the author's own period was still future, but sometimes does not trouble to adapt his tenses to this literary form, but writes as in his own time, when the false teachers were already present.

4. Where is the promise? i. e. its fulfilment. What becomes of the promise, seeing that circumstances shew (so they supposed) that it cannot and will not be fulfilled? 'The promise' does not mean some one particular saying, but the promise understood to be made in various ways in the O. T. and by our Lord and his apostles. The question may even challenge this understanding, and imply a denial that such a promise was ever given.

the fathers. Commonly used of the Israelites of the O. T., so Rom. ix. 5, of the Jews, 'whose are the fathers'; and Heb. i. 1, 'God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers.' The phrase is often so understood here, i. e. Through all the centuries since the promise was first made to ancient Israel, nothing has happened by way of even a small beginning of fulfilment, or to prepare the way for or indicate the coming of fulfilment; everything remains as it always was.

'Fathers,' however, has also been taken to mean the first generation of Christians. Such sayings of our Lord as Mark ix. 1, 'There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power,' were understood to mean that Christ would come again before all his contemporaries were dead. Hence, when they had all passed away, and he had not appeared, the promise of the second coming seemed finally and hopelessly discredited.

from the beginning of the creation: implying a further proof of the absurdity of the promise. The ancient order had lasted for ages, and was not likely to be upset; what always has been, so they insinuated, always will be, and always ought to be.

iii. 5–7. *Answer to the 'mockers.'*

The premise of their argument is false, and they know it to be false. The world has not always continued as it was since

there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted
6 out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by
which means the world that then was, being overflowed
7 with water, perished: but the heavens that now are, and
the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire,
being reserved against the day of judgement and destruction of ungodly men.

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the creation; there was the Flood. All through the ages before that event, the waters which were to execute God's judgement were there ready to work out His will, and yet forming part of what seemed an unchanging order. The Flood is a precedent for other cataclysms; and now fire awaits the Divine commission.

5. **For this they wilfully forget.** They could not persuade themselves that the world had undergone no sweeping changes, unless they deliberately ignored well-known facts. Alternative renderings are, 'Because they wish this, i. e. that there should be no second coming, they forget'; and, 'When they hold this,' &c.

there were heavens, &c. The Epistle takes for granted that the present physical order dates from the Flood, and reminds its readers that there were heavens and earth before that event.

an earth compacted out of water, &c. Gen. i. 6–10, where both earth and heaven are constituted from the waters.

6. **by which means:** plural, either because in Genesis we have 'waters' in two bodies, above and below the firmament; or with reference to both the water and the word.

world (*kosmos*) (see on Jas. i. 27): heaven and earth (cf. 7 ^{a}); or, less probably, the living creatures on the earth.

perished. Does not mean that the physical universe was annihilated, but that the old order or system of nature (*kosmos*) passed away. According to Jewish legends the effects of the Flood extended to heaven as well as earth.

7. **stored up for fire,** &c. The judgement of sinners in the overthrow of the present dispensation is a long-standing purpose of God (cf. Jude 14, 15). Fire is often spoken of in the O. T. as destroying Jerusalem, Babylon, &c., and is a common figure for God's judgement upon sinners. The passing away or perishing of heaven and earth is announced in Ps. cii. 26; Rev. xxi. 1; *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, lxv. 6; but our passage is the only really explicit statement in the Bible of the final destruction of the physical universe by fire. Even here, as destruction is also applied to the Flood, it means radical reconstitution rather than annihilation. Josephus, *Antiquities*, I. ii. 3, states that Adam predicted

But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day 8
is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand

that the universe would be twice destroyed, once by fire and once by water.

The R.V. marg. has 'stored with fire,' which would make the reference to fire more closely parallel to the way in which water is spoken of: as the ancient world included as an essential and important element the water which was to be the instrument of its ruin, so the present world was stored with the fire by which it would ultimately be consumed. It is very doubtful whether the Greek can bear this meaning. Some MSS. have 'preserved in fire.'

iii. 8–10. *Delay of second coming.*

Explanation of the long delay in the coming of Christ. Time with God is other than it is with us, so different that we cannot criticize His dealings in this respect. If He delays it is to lengthen out the period during which men may repent and be saved. After all, whenever the end comes it will be unexpected.

8. one day . . . as a thousand years. A kind of deduction from the following quotation.

a thousand years as one day. Ps. xc. 4, 'For a thousand years in thy sight are as the day[1], yesterday[1], when it is past, and as a watch in the night,' i.e. in the endless ages of the Divine existence a thousand years count for less than a day in the short life of man. Here this simple idea becomes a general principle and is further extended by the preceding clause. The starting-point of the controversy must have been an arithmetical interpretation of a reference to a period of time in some inspired saying, which extorted from it a prediction of the exact date of the second coming, perhaps according to the latter view of 'the fathers' in verse 4. The failure of this prediction gave the false teachers a pretext for discrediting the teaching it misinterpreted. But, in spiritual utterances, measures of time and space are often mere figurative aids to our feeble understanding, and we go utterly astray if we try to treat them as if they occurred in a mathematical formula. A 'day' or 'a thousand years' are merely periods of time; with Him to-day has its permanent, eternal issues; it is no more over and done with at nightfall than if it lasted a thousand years; and, on the other hand, all the events of the next thousand years are as real and present to Him as if they were happening now. Hence, in speaking of spiritual things, it is natural to speak of the present as embracing the future, and the future as included

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[1] Lit. tr. of LXX.

9 years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that
10 all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dis-

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in the present; but such modes of speech must not be interpreted as giving definite information as to the dates of particular events.

9. The Lord is not slack . . . but is longsuffering. Ecclus. xxxv. 18 says of the punishment of the wicked, 'The Lord will not be slack, neither will he be longsuffering toward them.'

to you-ward: implying that there were amongst his readers those who had gone astray, who were not yet hopelessly entangled in their former sins (ii. 20), but might repent.

not wishing, &c. Cf. Ezek. xviii. 32, 'For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord Jehovah: wherefore turn yourselves and live.'

10. the day of the Lord will come as a thief: i. e. giving no warning of its coming; perhaps quoted from 1 Thess. v. 2, 'For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night,' or what was 'perfectly known' to Paul's contemporaries may have been a current saying. The same figure is used in Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39; Rev. iii. 3, xvi. 15 of our Lord's coming. Delay was not to lull them into a false security.

Here 'in the night' in the A. V. is a copyist's addition, borrowed from 1 Thessalonians.

the heavens shall pass away, &c. Perhaps based on the saying recorded in Mark xiii. 24, 'In those days . . . the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken.' Cf. Isa. xxxiv. 4, 'All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fade away'; also li. 6, and the quotation of these passages in Heb. i. 10–12.

with a great noise (*roizēdon*). Only here in the N. T. The noun, *roizos*, is used of the whizzing of an arrow or a scourge, or of the rustling of wings. Here it refers to the crackling and roaring of fire.

elements (*stoicheia*). Either, as A. V. and R. V., i. e. 'the materials of the physical universe,' implying not merely the destruction of the order of the universe, but its annihilation; or, as R. V. marg., 'heavenly bodies,' a closer parallel to Mark. A third

solved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these 11
things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in *all* holy living and godliness, looking 12

view has met with some acceptance recently, viz. that the *stoicheia* are 'the elementary spirits, dwelling in the world, which have been sent forth by God to animate the dead matter[1].'

with fervent heat: *lit.* 'being burnt up.'

burned up (*katakaēsetai*). Neither this reading nor 'disappear' (*aphanisthēsontai*) are very strongly supported. The best attested reading is 'discovered' (*eurethēsetai*), which does not make sense. The original reading has perhaps disappeared, but it must have been a word meaning 'burned up,' or 'disappeared,' or something similar. Some authorities omit the whole clause, 'And the earth . . . burned up,' doubtless on account of the difficulty in the reading. Westcott and Hort suggest that the original reading was *ruēsetai* or *rusetai*, 'flow away.'

These pictures give us the form in which our author naturally expressed the truth of a coming judgement and end of the present dispensation. But the principle which he himself applies in verse 8 to the interpretation of descriptions of time in inspired utterances must also be applied to such descriptions of physical phenomena. An examination of the context of this and similar passages, e. g. those referred to in the first note on this verse, shew that they are largely figurative.

iii. 11-13. *Practical application.*

The prospect of the terrible close of the present dispensation and the hope of a more blessed future ought to be a powerful incentive to holy living.

11. holy living and godliness. The Greek words are plural, expressing 'all kinds of'; hence the addition of *all* in our versions.

12. (See also on verse 10.) **earnestly desiring.** Only holy living could render such a desire possible. R. V. marg. 'hastening,' a more usual meaning of the word. According to verse 9 the Divine forbearance waits in order to afford certain persons an opportunity of repentance; if all embrace this opportunity there will be no need of further delay. Moreover, the holy life of believers is the most convincing testimony to the gospel. When all Christians practise all holy living and godliness, the work for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

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[1] Spitta apud E. Kühl (Meyer).

13 But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace,

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of the church will be perfected, because it can do nothing more to win the world. Another rendering is 'hastening on to.'

coming of the day of God. A unique phrase; elsewhere 'coming' (*parousia*) is either followed by 'Christ,' 'Lord,' or some other person, or used absolutely to mean 'the coming of the Lord'; and similarly we have 'the day of the Lord,' &c., never 'of God.' Perhaps we should translate 'the coming of Christ in the day of God.' Some copyists have substituted the more usual 'Lord' for 'God.'

by reason of which. Either the coming or the day, it makes no difference to the sense. The purpose of the present heavens and earth is to serve the present dispensation, the close of which is a sufficient reason for their dissolution.

13. his. Either God, referred to in the previous verse, or Christ; or perhaps our Epistle is not careful to define which is meant.

new heavens and a new earth. First promised in Isa. lxv. 17, lxvi. 22; and seen in vision replacing the old in Rev. xxi. 1.

iii. 14-18. *Closing exhortation.*

With such prospects in view, seek earnestly to attain to a holy life and the peace that accompanies it. Do not let the delay of judgement render you careless; remember that, as Paul constantly taught, the Divine forbearance gives you added opportunities of obtaining salvation. And, speaking of Paul's Epistles, we would remind you that they are sometimes obscure and liable to be misunderstood; and ignorant men, hesitating between right and wrong, have wrested from such passages a justification for choosing the wrong, and so have come to ruin. Do not follow their example, but rather grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, to whom be eternal glory.

14. ye may be found in peace: i.e. they may be able to confront the terrors of the second coming with serene confidence, perhaps we may also include the idea of being at peace among themselves. Others connect 'in peace' with 'look'; they would await the day without impatience.

without spot and blameless in his sight. And account 15
that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as
our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom
given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all *his* epistles, 16
speaking in them of these things; wherein are some
things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and

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without spot and blameless. The Greek *aspiloi kai amōmētoi* suggests a contrast to the false teachers, who are described (ii. 13) as *spiloi kai mōmoi*, 'spots and blemishes.'

15. account that, &c. Enforcing verse 9.

even as . . . Paul . . . wrote. A close parallel to 15[a] is Rom. ii. 4, 'Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?' (cf. Rom. ix. 22); but this is scarcely a constant theme of the Pauline Epistles, and our Epistle can hardly have been intended to be understood as written to the Romans (see below on 'unto you'). The reference, therefore, seems to be chiefly to the exhortation to a moral life in verse 14; such exhortations are included in all the Pauline Epistles (see also on verse 16).

our beloved brother. Not only fellow Christian with Peter and those addressed, but colleague and brother apostle.

according to the wisdom given to him. A formal recognition of Paul's inspiration. This clause and the preceding, and 'the other scriptures' in verse 16, in a letter written in Peter's name, emphasize that harmony between the teaching and work of the two apostles which is implied by the Pauline character of 1 Peter. As there were sects in the second century which exalted Peter at the expense of Paul, the reference was partly introduced to afford an opportunity of calling attention to the harmony which really existed (see also on verse 16).

15, 16. unto you . . . also in all his epistles. This contrast implies a special reference to one or more of Paul's Epistles; according to some, Ephesians, because verse 14 might well refer to the hortatory section, Eph. v. 1–14; but the words may refer, as this verse states, to any of his Epistles. Probably the author, writing from Asia Minor, or some district in it, is thinking of the epistle or epistles addressed to that district; which again would point to one or all of the group Ephesians, Colossians, Galatians (see also above on 15[b]).

16. some things hard to be understood, &c. This is not a general reference to the obscure passages in the Pauline Epistles; the author has in mind particular passages which had been

unstedfast wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto
17 their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, knowing
these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away
with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own sted-
18 fastness. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our

'wrested' with disastrous results. From the immediate context, verses 14, 15, the misinterpretation consisted in antinomianisms, obtaining from recognized Christian teaching a justification for sin; one of the chief objects of our Epistle is to combat such errors. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith, not by works, and of subjection not under the law, but under grace, readily lent itself to such perversion; and has always been more or less perverted in this way by professing Christians. When the false teachers 'promised their disciples liberty' (ii. 19), they might quote such passages as Gal. v. 1, 'With freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.' Paul himself was always conscious of the possibility that his teaching might be thus perverted, and repeatedly tried to guard against it, e. g. Gal. v. 13, 'For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion of the flesh.'

ignorant: unlearned, not trained in the study of Scripture, e. g. to give a modern application, not trained to interpret a passage by its context and according to the whole teaching of the work in which it stands, and in view of the circumstances and intention of the author; but taking isolated fragments in any sense that the mere words could be made to bear.

unstedfast. The false teachers are intended; in ii. 14 the term is used of their disciples. Steadfast loyalty to Christian faith and morality would have made it impossible to suppose that Paul sanctioned lax living; but men wavering between duty and self-indulgence, and inclining to the latter, were ready to catch at any pretext.

wrest: 'twist' or 'wrench,' especially 'to stretch on the rack, to torture.'

the other scriptures: the rest of the Bible, not merely the rest of the N. T. Cf. Introduction, pp. 65 ff.

17. wicked. See on ii. 7.

your stedfastness. The author's great anxiety as to the future conduct of his readers shews that their 'steadfastness' was not very assured, and that the false teachers were able and influential.

18. Cf. i. 2, 8.

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* the glory both now and for ever. Amen.

To him be the glory, &c. An abbreviated version of Jude 25; cf. also the doxologies, Rom. ix. 5, xi. 36, and xvi. 27, 'to him (whom) be the glory for ever'; Phil. iv. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 16; 2 Tim. iv. 18; and Heb. xiii. 21, 'to whom be the glory for ever and ever'; 1 Pet. v. 11.

for ever: R. V. marg., '*Gr.* unto the day of eternity'; *lit.* 'of the age.' The phrase is different from that used in the doxologies just referred to, and only occurs here in the N. T. The phrase occurs in Ecclus. xviii. 10, 'As a drop of water from the sea, and a pebble from the sand; so are a few years in the day of eternity,' where 'day of eternity' is a synonym for 'eternity.' Here our author also has in mind the use of 'day' as 'Day of Judgement'; we might paraphrase, 'Unto that age which is ushered in by the Day of Judgement and continues for ever.'

Amen: omitted by the Vatican MS.

The oldest MSS. add the subscription 'of Peter II;' this is, of course, not part of the Epistle itself.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF
JOHN

1 That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the

i. 1–4. *Purpose in writing.*

I write to tell you what I learnt from my personal intimacy with Jesus of Nazareth, of the Eternal and Divine Word which was incarnate in him; in order that, sharing my knowledge, you may also share my fellowship with the Father and the Son; and that thus my heart may be made glad.

1–4. Note the absence of any personal greeting, or announcement of the writer's name. The Epistle is anonymous. Cf. Introduction, p. 71.

This introductory paragraph is modelled on the prologue to the fourth Gospel (John i. 1–18); cf. below.

1. That which: either the Son as eternal and incarnate, the neuter suggesting his superhuman majesty (cf. John iv. 22); or the truth concerning the nature and work of the Son, which was eternally true, but was revealed in the Incarnation; the latter view seems required by 'concerning.'

from the beginning. Cf. John i. 1, 2; Gen. i. 1.

we. The Epistle uses the first plural freely throughout. It is not the editorial 'we.' Elsewhere the author, the Apostle John[1], associates himself with his readers; here and in similar passages he speaks in the name of the apostles generally.

heard . . . seen . . . beheld . . . handled: in their intercourse with Jesus during his earthly life. 'Beheld' implies continuous and attentive observation. 'Handled' may refer to the incidents after the Resurrection, John xx. 27; Luke xxiv. 39.

concerning: A. V., 'of.'

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[1] See Introduction, p. 76.

Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have 2
seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life,
the eternal *life*, which was with the Father, and was
manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard 3
declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship
with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father,
and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, 4
that our joy may be fulfilled.

And this is the message which we have heard from 5

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the Word of life[1]. The analogy of John i. 1 suggests the interpretation 'the living, life-giving Word,' 'the Word, which is life,' i. e. Christ; so E. V. 'the Word.' On the other hand, the use of the almost identical phrase[2] in Phil. ii. 16, 'holding forth the word of life,' and the numerous similar phrases, 'word of the kingdom,' 'word of truth,' &c., suggest 'the gospel which reveals and bestows life'; so R. V. marg. There is little practical difference between the two views.

2. A parenthesis.

the life, the eternal life: A. V., 'that eternal life.' The life which Christ possesses, bestows, and maintains; almost equals 'Christ': cf. John i. 4, xi. 25.

which was with the Father. Cf. John i. 2.

3. we have seen. Note the threefold use of this phrase in verses 1–3, which furnish a good illustration of the characteristic Johannine method of ringing the changes on modifications and expansions of the same idea.

fellowship[3]. The 'having in common,' 'sharing,' 'collective participation[4]' in spiritual feelings, duties, and privileges. The verse suggests that fellowship with the Apostles is the condition of true fellowship with Christ.

4. our joy may be fulfilled: because the supreme joy of the Christian is that others should share his bliss. A. V., with some ancient authorities, 'your joy.'

i. 5-7. *Light and darkness.*

We were taught by Christ that God is absolute light. Hence the condition of true fellowship with God and the Church is that

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[1] τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς.

[2] λόγον ζωῆς.

[3] κοινωνία: only in this chapter in the Johannine books; elsewhere in the N.T. only Acts (once), Pauline Epistles (fourteen times), Hebrews (once).

[4] Findlay on 1 Cor. i. 9.

him, and announce unto you, that God is light, and in
6 him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellow-
ship with him, and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do
7 not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the
light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood
8 of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say

we should walk in the light. Then and then only do we obtain forgiveness through Christ. Cf. John xii. 35, 36.

5. him: Jesus.

God is light. This equating of God or Christ to some abstract quality is characteristic of the Johannine writings; thus in this Epistle, God is also love, iv. 8, 16. In the Gospel, Christ is 'the resurrection and the life' (xi. 25), 'the truth and the life' (xiv. 6). Life, truth, light, are aspects or activities of the perfect nature of God. In the Gospel, Christ is 'the light of the world,' the manifestation of God to man (i. 4-9, iii. 19-21, viii. 12, xii. 35 f.). Cf. also Jas. i. 17. Philo[1] also says, 'First of all God is light.'

'Light' is a natural symbol for sincere benevolence, absolute truth, purity, and righteousness, and 'darkness' for the absence of these virtues, or for the presence of the opposite vices. Cf. ii. 9-11.

Here we first meet with the characteristic Johannine method of antithesis, 'light and darkness,' 'truth and falsehood' (verse 6), 'good and evil' (3 John 11), 'joy and sorrow' (John xvi. 20), 'life and death' (iii. 14), 'sin and righteousness' (iii. 7, 8), 'love and hatred' (iv. 19, 20), &c.

The reader should compare Isa. xlv. 7, 'I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I am Jehovah, that doeth all these things.'

6. do not the truth: i. e. do not live according to the truth. The words render an O. T. phrase which means 'to be faithful to one's promises,' Gen. xxiv. 49. In the N. T. the phrase only occurs here and in John iii. 21.

7. we have fellowship one with another: i. e. Christians with fellow Christians, perhaps also with God. Fellowship, mutual knowledge and fellow feeling, is only possible between those who 'walk in the light'; see on verse 5.

cleanseth us from all sin: the sin into which those who 'walk in the light' still fall.

i. 8-10. *All are sinners.*

We need forgiveness; it is only by deliberate self-deception that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and 9 righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, 10 we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

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[1] *De Somniis*, i. 13, ap. Holtzmann.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye 2

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that we can persuade ourselves that we are free from sin. We cannot be forgiven unless we acknowledge that we are sinners. In denying this obvious fact, men not only deceive themselves, but also contradict God, and shew that they have not received the truth of the gospel.

8. If we say that we have no sin: i. e. that sin neither finds expression in our acts nor abides within us as a motive power; a tenet of some Gnostic heretics. It is a tempting but noxious fallacy to argue that because a Christian ought not to sin, therefore a true Christian does not sin.

8–10. the truth is not in us . . . his word is not in us. Such an error involves a lack of sincerity, and a low standard of moral and spiritual life, which shew that the truth, the word, the gospel, as a source of spiritual enlightenment, has not been fully received.

9. confess our sins: to God, and to man, at any rate so far as to acknowledge that we are sinners, Jas. v. 16.

faithful: to His promises, and therefore **righteous.**

10. we have not sinned: i.e. since conversion. This interpretation is required by verse 8 and the general context.

a liar. In view of inspired declarations of the universality of sin, e. g. Ps. xiv; John xv. 2.

ii. 1, 2. *Christ our advocate.*

I write this to help you to avoid sin. Yet, as I have said, experience shews that even Christians fall into sin; but the atonement by which Christ obtained forgiveness for the whole world makes him a successful advocate with God on behalf of those who believe on Him.

1. little children[1]: a favourite term in this Epistle; only elsewhere in the N. T. in John xiii. 33; Gal. iv. 19.

that ye may not sin. Nothing leads men more readily into sin than the belief that they are free from sin; but frank recognition and acknowledgement of wrong-doing help them to resist sin. The Greek phrase does not merely mean 'that ye may not be in the habit of sinning,' but almost 'that ye may on no occasion

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[1] *τεκνία.*

may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate
2 with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is
the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but
3 also for the whole world. And hereby know we that we
4 know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith,

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fall into sin.' This is the ideal standard at which every Christian should aim.

if any man sin. The context, especially the next verse, shews that 'any Christian' is meant; and the Greek implies that such an occurrence is a normal possibility in the life of a Christian, which is never perfectly a Christian life.

Advocate (*paraklētos*): elsewhere in the N. T. only in John xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 7 (which see); R. V. marg. 'Comforter,' or 'Helper.' It is used in these passages as a title of the Holy Spirit, who is often spoken of in later Christian literature as 'the Paraclete.' John xiv. 16, 'He shall give you another Comforter,' implies that *paraklētos* is also a title of our Lord. R. V. marg. has here 'Comforter' or 'Helper'; but the word is clearly used here in its usual classical sense of 'advocate.'

righteous: therefore qualified to intercede for the unrighteous.

2. propitiation[1]**:** that which induces any one to be gracious and kindly; here the work of Christ, through which God forgives sinners. Cf. Rom. iii. 24-26.

ii. 3-6. *A consistent life shews that we are 'in Christ.'*

But the possibility of forgiveness should not encourage us to sin. Obedience is the proof that we know and love Christ. Professions to know him are false, when they are made by those who do not obey him. If we are 'in Christ,' we shall follow his example.

3-6. The relation of this paragraph to the preceding is obvious. A Christian may be overcome by temptation, or may fall into occasional sin through carelessness and lack of moral discernment; but he will not live in habitual and deliberate sin. These verses give a practical interpretation of i. 5-7.

3. know[2] **him:** know God's truth and have experience of fellowship with Him. Thus Westcott, 'To know God as God is to be in vital fellowship with him, to love Him, to fulfil that relation towards Him for which we are born.'

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[1] *ἱλασμός*: in the N. T. only here and in iv. 10.

[2] *ἐγνώκαμεν*: perhaps with reference to the claims which the Gnostics made to a special knowledge of God.

I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a
liar, and the truth is not in him: but whoso keepeth his 5
word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected.
Hereby know we that we are in him: he that saith he 6
abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he
walked.

Beloved, no new commandment write I unto you, but 7
an old commandment which ye had from the beginning:
the old commandment is the word which ye heard.
Again, a new commandment write I unto you, which 8

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4. Cf. i. 6, 8, iv. 20.

5. his word: not merely 'his commandments,' but all to which Christian teaching prompts the loyal follower of Christ.

hath . . . been perfected: has attained its full growth, become mature. Notice how verses 3 and 4 illustrate our author's habit of repeating a statement with some slight differences, here in a somewhat stronger form. In verse 3 keeping commandments shews knowledge; here, keeping the word shews love. Cf. iv. 12, 13; John xiv. 21, 23.

the love of God: the Christian's love towards God.

5, 6. are in him . . . abideth in him. This figure is most simply expanded by comparing the influence, spirit, and presence of God to an atmosphere which is the constant 'environment' and the determining condition of the Christian life. Cf. Acts xvii. 28, 'In him we live, and move, and have our being.' John often speaks of 'being' or 'abiding' 'in God' and 'in him,' 'him' being sometimes clearly God the Father, sometimes perhaps used with intentional ambiguity, so that it may be understood either of God or Christ. John never uses Paul's favourite phrases, 'In Christ,' 'In Christ Jesus.'

ii. 7–11. *The new-old commandment.*

The example of Christ teaches us one special lesson, summed up in a commandment as old as Christianity and yet always new, the commandment that Christians should love one another. This is what is meant by 'walking in the light.'

7. Beloved: A. V., 'brethren,' following inferior MSS.

7, 8. no new commandment . . . an old commandment . . . a new commandment. The reference is not to what precedes, but to the duty of loving the brethren, enforced in the following verses, and in iii. 10, 14–24, iv. 7—v. 2. The Apostle refers to our Lord's words, John xiii. 34, 'A new commandment I give

thing is true in him and in you; because the darkness
9 is passing away, and the true light already shineth. He
that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in
10 the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother
abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stum-

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unto you, that ye love one another.' This commandment was in a sense old when the Epistle was written some fifty or sixty years after the death of Christ; and yet it was then, and always will be, new, constantly unfolding a new and fuller meaning, and coming to men as a new revelation of duty. Love towards all fellow Christians as Christians, even when they differ from us in doctrine, ritual, church organization, and discipline, is a duty which, even to-day, the church seldom ventures to preach, and rarely attempts to practice. Cf. 2 John 5.

from the beginning: of Christianity. The command to love Christians could not very well be older; cf. ii. 24, iii. 11; 2 John 5, 6. This 'new commandment' is an adaptation to new conditions of Lev. xix. 18, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

which thing is true in him and in you: 'him' is God or Christ. The meaning of the clause is quite uncertain. It has been variously explained, thus: (i) The law of love is valid both in God and the Christian; (ii) The fact that the commandment is new, is true of God as having given it afresh and in a new form through Christ, and ever renewing it through the Spirit; and therefore also of man as ever receiving it as new.

because. The uncertainty as to the previous clause makes the connexion indicated by this word uncertain.

the darkness . . . the true light. The sin, misery, and ignorance of the old dispensation . . . the teaching, influence, spirit, and salvation of Christ (John i. 4-9, viii. 12; Rom. xiii. 12; Eph. v. 8; 1 Thess. v. 5).

is passing away . . . already: A.V., less accurately, 'is past,' 'now.'

the true light. Cf. John i. 9. 'True' = 'real,' 'genuine[1].'

9. brother: fellow Christian, iii. 13, 14, and generally in the N. T. He who has come to love a Christian as Christian will find that this also involves loving men as men[2]. Cf. iii. 14, 15; 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

10. Cf. John xi. 9, 10.

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[1] ἀληθινός, a favourite term in John, Hebrews, 1 John, and Revelation. Only twice elsewhere in the N. T.

[2] Cf. Westcott on this verse.

bling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in the 11
darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not
whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his
eyes.

I write unto you, *my* little children, because your sins 12
are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, 13
fathers, because ye know him which is from the beginning.
I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome
the evil one. I have written unto you, little children,

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11. Cf. John xii. 35.

ii. 12-14. *To children, young men, fathers.*

In sending you these admonitions, I feel that I have a right to appeal to you with confidence, because you are children of God, whom He has forgiven, elders with ripe experience, young men whose spiritual energy has already won victories over the evil one.

12-14. Here the Apostle repeats not merely a sentence (see on i. 3), but a short paragraph with variations.

12. my **little children**[1]: an affectionate term for believers generally, cf. ii. 1, 28, iii. 7; for 'children' in the same sense, iii. 1, 2.

your sins are forgiven: an initial experience of the Christian life.

for his name's sake: for the sake of what Christ is and has done.

13. fathers, because ye know, &c.: men of years, knowledge, and experience.

him which is from the beginning: Christ, as in i. 1 (which see).

young men: because ye have overcome the evil one. The younger men, specially exposed to conflict and temptation, are encouraged by being reminded of the moral and spiritual victories with which their Christian life had begun.

I have written[2]: probably to be understood as almost synonymous with 'I write,' according to the Greek idiom[3] by which 'The writer of a letter sometimes puts himself in the place of his reader, and describes as past that which is to himself present, but which will be past to his reader[4].' The 'I write,' 'I have

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[1] *τεκνία.* [2] *ἔγραψα.* [3] Epistolary aorist.

[4] Burton, *N.T. Words and Tenses*, p. 21. R.V. marg. 'I wrote' suggests another view, a reference to a previous letter, or to the gospel.

14 because ye know the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye know him which is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye
15 have overcome the evil one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the
16 world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but

written,' might be paraphrased, 'Whether I look at these matters from my point of view as writer, or from yours as readers.' Here also the A.V. has 'I write' with inferior MS.

little children: a different word[1] from that in verse 12, but used similarly for believers generally; Westcott, 'little ones,' as subordinate.

because ye know the Father. All Christians had an experience of God, though only the more mature knew Christ as 'him which is from the beginning.' Christian life begins with a sense of relationship to the Father through Christ; later on the consecrated intellect has leisure to meditate on the Eternal Sonship.

14. young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you. The added clauses remind them of the resources to which they owed the victories they had already won, and must look for future success.

ii. 15-17. *The world and the Father.*

If you are to abide in strength and knowledge, your love must be wholly given to God and withdrawn from the transient world of evil self-indulgence, which is always and altogether hostile to Him.

15. Love not the world. For 'world' see on Jas. i. 27. Using 'world' in a general sense, John could say, 'God loved the world' (John iii. 16).

If any man love the world, &c. Cf. Matt. vi. 24; Jas. iv. 4.

16. lust. See on Jas. i. 14.

lust of the flesh: gross and excessive sensual appetites, impurity, gluttony, drunkenness, &c. Cf. 1 Pet. ii. 11.

lust of the eyes. This phrase only occurs here, and no

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[1] *παιδία.*

is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the 17
lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth
for ever.

Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye heard 18
that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many

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certain and exact parallel to it is quoted. As 'lust of the flesh' is sinful desire excited by excessive and morbid cravings of the body, and perhaps the unredeemed nature generally, 'lust of the eyes' will be sinful desire excited by the sight of attractive objects, including all forms of covetousness: cf. the Tenth Commandment. Westcott writes somewhat differently: 'The "wants" which man feels can be divided into two great classes. Some things he desires to appropriate personally; some things he desires to enjoy without appropriation. The desire of the flesh embraces the one class (e.g. gratification of appetites); the desire of the eyes the other (e.g. pursuit of art as an end).'

the vainglory of life. 'Vainglory,' A. V. 'Pride[1],' ostentatious and insolent display of 'life[2],' i. e. means of living, position in life, worldly advantages; and the enjoyment of such display. The two 'lusts,' on the one hand, and 'the pride of life,' on the other, express the attitude of the worldly man respectively to what he wants, and to what he has already got.

17. the world passeth away. Cf. 1 Cor. vii. 31.

ii. 18, 19. *The antichrists.*

You have not long to struggle, for the appointed sign of the approaching end of the present dispensation has appeared in the shape of false teachers arising in the church, and betraying their disloyalty by separating themselves from us.

18. it is the last hour. See on Jas. v. 3, 7, and cf. Heb. i. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 7.

as ye heard that antichrist cometh. The term 'antichrist' occurs here, ii. 22, iv. 3; 2 John 7, and not elsewhere in the N.T. Antichrist is 'one who, assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Christ[3],' a development of the pseudo-Christ of Matt. xxiv. 24; Mark xiii. 22. 'Ye heard' refers to apostolic teaching, which is also illustrated by Matt. xxiv. 5, 24; John v. 43; Acts xx. 30; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1. The Jewish apocalyptic literature taught that the establishment of the Messianic kingdom would be preceded by a period of great distress and spiritual corruption (Dan. vii. 7, &c.), in which evil potentates would arise as champions of sin against God.

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[1] ἀλαζονεία.

[2] βίος, R.V. 'living' in Luke xv. 12.

[3] Westcott.

antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour.
19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if
they had been of us, they would have continued with us:
but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest how
20 that they all are not of us. And ye have an anointing
21 from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not

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many antichrists: teachers who used the name and authority of Christ in support of practices and opinions contrary to his teaching. It is not clear whether 'antichrist' is a great personal champion of evil, of whom the many are forerunners; or the personification of the spirit by which they are inspired: cf. 2 John 7.

whereby we know. The appearance of such false teachers is a sign that a great spiritual movement has lost something of its original force and purity, and needs renewal.

19. They went out from us. They arose within the church, had had Christian training; and, at any rate externally, had lived the Christian life. They came from the church; but, from what follows, they seem to have severed themselves from the church, or from the fellowship of John and his followers. Such schismatic sects arose towards the close of the first century: cf. Rev. ii. 6, 14, 15, 20.

they were not of us, &c.: they had never been Christians at heart, else they would have wished to remain in fellowship with the Apostle: cf. John vi. 37, x. 28, 29.

that they might be made manifest. While they remained in the church, it was not easy to distinguish them in every case from other teachers: cf. 1 Cor. xi. 19.

that they all are not of us: R.V. marg., 'that not all are of us,' i. e. that not all those who are externally connected with the church are really Christians. The A.V., 'that they were not all of us,' gives an impossible sense; it implies that *some* of these 'antichrists' *were* 'of us.'

ii. 20-23. *How the antichrist is known.*

But I am confident that you will not be led astray, because you are taught of the Holy Spirit; you will know that the teaching of these men, the denial that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, is false, and shews that they have no true knowledge of God.

20. ye have an anointing (*chrisma*), and therefore are in fellowship with *Christ, the* Anointed One; are true *Christians*; and have nothing in common with *antichrist.* The *chrisma* is the sacred anointing oil, here used as a figure for the Holy Spirit. Cf. Zech. iv.

the Holy One: either Christ (Mark i. 24; Acts iii. 14, &c.)

written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and because no lie is of the truth.
Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? 22
This is the antichrist, *even* he that denieth the Father
and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same 23
hath not the Father: he that confesseth the Son hath

or the Father (2 Cor. i. 21, 'He that . . . anointed us, is God'; Heb. i. 9).

know all things. So the Alexandrine MS. and the Codex Ephremi. Cf. verse 27; John xiv. 26, xvi. 13; and Jude 5. Westcott explains: 'Ye have potentially complete and certain knowledge: no false teaching can deceive you, if ye are faithful to yourselves.' But the two oldest manuscripts, the Sinaitic and the Vatican, have 'ye all know,' i. e. 'know the truth.'

21. no lie is of the truth. Those who knew the truth would recognize its opposite, and would discern the true character of the false teachers: cf. iii. 19 and John viii. 44.

22. the liar . . . the antichrist: not as the A. V., 'a liar,' 'antichrist.'

he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ. The Jews denied this; but this verse refers not to them, but to those who professed to be Christian teachers. Such teachers anticipated later Gnostics, who denied that the Christ ever really became incarnate; Jesus, according to them, was not the Christ, but was merely possessed for a while by an 'æon' or Divine emanation. There was no union of the human and the Divine. Other Gnostics repudiated the O. T., and denied that the Christian Saviour was the Jewish Messiah. Cf. iv. 3; 2 John 7.

23. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father. Without a Son, God would not be Father, and we should have no revelation of His Fatherhood. John xv. 23; 2 John 9.

he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also. The corresponding words in the A.V. are in italics, probably because the Greek clause translated by them had been omitted in the late manuscripts on which the translators mainly relied; but the testimony of the early manuscripts, &c., shew that they were a part of the original text. It was accidentally omitted because it had the same ending, 'hath the Father,' as the previous clause[1]. Cf. iv. 15; John xiv. 7-10. Confesseth, from heart-felt conviction.

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[1] 'Also' is not at the end in the Greek.

24 the Father also. As for you, let that abide in you
which ye heard from the beginning. If that which ye
heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall
25 abide in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the
promise which he promised us, *even* the life eternal.
26 These things have I written unto you concerning them
27 that would lead you astray. And as for you, the anointing
which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye
need not that any one teach you; but as his anointing
teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is

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ii. 24-29. *The teaching of the Spirit.*

Hold fast to the teaching, to the promise of eternal life, which you received when you became Christians. Indeed, I have not written because I doubted either your loyalty or your discernment, but to warn you to exercise that discernment to test the false teachers. An intelligent loyalty will prepare you to meet your Master, and a holy life will establish your right to be called sons of God.

24. As for you: in contrast to the false teachers.

that . . . which ye heard from the beginning. See on verse 7. After 'that' the A. V. adds 'therefore,' with inferior MSS. Cf. John xv. 7.

25. he: Christ.

promised us. John iii. 15, &c. Some ancient authorities have 'you.'

life eternal. Cf. John xvii. 3, 'This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ'; see also on i. 2.

27. anointing. See on verse 20.

ye need not that any one teach you, &c. Cf. John xvi. 13; Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Why then should the Apostle write to them? To confirm them against the false teachers by his authority, and to remind them that they needed no fresh teaching, but only to hold fast to what they knew, and seek the guidance of the Spirit in applying familiar truths to new circumstances.

his[1] **anointing.** A. V., with some ancient authorities, 'the same[2] anointing.'

as his anointing teacheth . . . and is true. R. V. marg., 'so it is true.' The exact reading and translation are a little uncertain, but the general sense is clear. The passage asserts

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[1] *αὐτοῦ.* [2] *αὐτό.*

no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in him. And 28
now, *my* little children, abide in him; that, if he shall be
manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed
before him at his coming. If ye know that he is 29
righteous, ye know that every one also that doeth
righteousness is begotten of him.

Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed 3
upon us, that we should be called children of God: and
such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not,
because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we children 2

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that the readers may obtain true guidance from the indwelling Spirit.

ye abide in him. R. V. marg., 'abide ye.' The Greek word is ambiguous, and may have either meaning.

28. if he shall be manifested. The A. V., 'when he shall appear,' is a literal rendering of a reading found in inferior MSS.; but it also gives the sense of the true reading better than the R.V. The Apostle does not mean to imply any doubt as to the certainty, but only as to the time and circumstances of the manifestation—'If the time of Christ's manifestation should arrive.'

coming: *parousia.* See Jas. v. 7.

29. ye know. R. V. marg., 'know ye': cf. on verse 27. They might know that the children of God would resemble their Father, and thus they might test both themselves and the false teachers. Cf. iii. 7, 10.

iii. 1-3. *The children of God.*

For the Divine Father, in His great love, has not only called us His children, but also made our sonship a reality. Hence men who live to themselves and not to God are as little able to understand us as they are to understand Him. But to us our present sonship is an earnest of closer likeness to Christ in the day when 'we shall see him as he is.' This great hope encourages us to strive now after that holy life, to which we are finally to attain.

1. the Father . . . children of God. God is 'Father' not only in relation to Christ, but also to Christ's people. Cf. on John i. 14.

and such **we are.** Omitted by the A. V. with inferior MSS. Cf. John i. 12; Rom. viii. 14-19; Gal. iv. 5-9.

the world. See on Jas. i. 27.

because it knew him not. 'Him' is God revealed in Christ: cf. John xv. 18, 19, xvii. 25.

of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall
be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall
3 be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And
every one that hath this hope *set* on him purifieth him-
4 self, even as he is pure. Every one that doeth sin doeth
5 also lawlessness: and sin is lawlessness. And ye know

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2. it is not yet made manifest what we shall be . . . we shall be like him. At first sight it might seem that, in becoming 'children of God,' the readers had attained the highest pitch of perfection and blessedness. But Isa. lvi. 5 speaks of 'a name better than of sons and of daughters.' The Apostle's readers were indeed 'children of God,' but by no means perfect in filial love and obedience. There is therefore prospect and promise of a sonship like that of the 'only begotten Son of God,' which shall realize the ideal of the relationship of a son to the Father: cf. Rom. viii. 29; Phil. iii. 21.

We know. A. V., 'but we know,' with inferior MSS.

if he shall be manifested. R. V. marg., if 'it' shall be manifested. The subject is not expressed in the Greek, so that, apart from the context, we may translate either 'he' or 'it.' 'He' is supported by ii. 28 (which see), where the same phrase occurs, and the subject is clearly 'he'; and also by the general context: 'he' gives a sense required by the following, 'we shall see *him*.' Although 'it' is suggested by the previous phrase '*it* is not yet made manifest,' 'it' gives a very poor sense.

we shall see him even as he is. Cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 12; Col. iii. 3, 4.

3. that hath this hope set **on him.** It is no vain imagination suggested by man's own desires, but is bestowed upon him by God.

purifieth . . . pure. See on Jas. iii. 17.

he[1]**:** Christ, a specially emphatic term in the Greek, for which we have no equivalent.

iii. 4–8. *The Christian does not live in sin.*

You know what a holy life is; let no sophistry induce you to juggle with your consciences, or to believe that what conscience condemns is consistent with loyalty to Christ. Hold fast to your knowledge of the contrast between right and wrong, between Christ and Satan.

4. sin is lawlessness. The A. V., 'sin is the transgression of the law,' is misleading; it suggests that the clause is a definition of sin, whereas the Apostle means that sin, which some false

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[1] ἐκεῖνος.

that he was manifested to take away sins; and in him is
no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whoso- 6
ever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him.
My little children, let no man lead you astray: he that 7
doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous:
he that doeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth 8
from the beginning. To this end was the Son of God
manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.
Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his 9

teachers maintained was consistent with obedience to Christ, was invariably a breach of his law. A state of sin involved defiant rebellion against him. Occasionally it has been maintained that sin was a matter of indifference to the believer who was one with Christ; but the danger indicated here more often takes the form of an attempt to persuade oneself that particular sins are justifiable. Cf. v. 17; Rom. iv. 15.

5. **to take away.** R. V. marg., less probably, 'to bear.' Cf. John i. 29.

sins. A. V., with some ancient authorities, 'our sins.'

in him is no sin. Cf. 2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. iv. 15.

6. **sinneth**: habitually, lives a life surrendered to sin. Cf. ii. 4; 3 John 11.

knoweth. R. V. marg. 'hath known.'

7. ***My* little children.** The '*My*' of the R. V. indicates that the phrase translates a different Greek word[1] from that[2] rendered 'little children,' which latter, the less affectionate of the two, is read here by the A. V., with some ancient authorities.

he that doeth righteousness, &c. Cf. ii. 29.

8. **he that doeth sin is of the devil.** Cf. verse 10; John viii. 44; Acts xiii. 10. The influences which control his life emanate from the powers of evil.

from the beginning: of history in Gen. iii.

that he might destroy the works of the devil. Cf. Heb. ii. 14.

iii. 9-12. *Mutual love the mark of the children of God.*

Your conduct will shew whether you are children of God, or of the devil. The infallible token of righteousness is love for the brethren; on the other hand, hatred shews that righteousness is absent, as in the case of Cain.

9. **is begotten.** The Greek implies 'has been made and remains a child of God.' Cf. v. 18.

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[1] *τεκνία.*

[2] *παιδία.*

seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is
10 begotten of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not
11 his brother. For this is the message which ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another:
12 not as Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

13, 14 Marvel not, brethren, if the world hateth you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because

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his seed abideth in him. The Divine life remains and is active, grows, and prevails more and more. Cf. 1 Pet. i. 23.

doeth no sin . . . cannot sin. So far as a man lives, as a child of God, according to the Divine life given him in Christ. Sin is due to the dying life of 'the old Adam,' which is only gradually eradicated.

10. he that loveth . . . his brother. A crucial test of righteousness, which, however, is often evaded. 'To love any one as a Christian' sometimes comes to mean 'to cherish ill will.'

11. the message. Cf. i. 5, ii. 7.

12. Cain. Cf. Heb. xi. 4; Jude 11.

of the evil one: though he was the first-born of parents who were the immediate creation of God. Physical and spiritual ancestry are quite distinct. Cf. verse 8.

his works were evil. This is clearly implied by the narrative in Genesis; but it is no longer possible to determine in what, according to that narrative, the evil of Cain's works, or the righteousness of Abel's, consisted.

iii. 13–18. *Love and hatred.*

Hence it is natural that the unrighteous world should hate you. But, within the church, the mutual love of the brethren shews that they have entered into the new life of Christ, just as hatred is a token of spiritual death. Hatred would fain rob its enemy of life, but love lays down life for the brethren, after the example of Christ. How much more then shall we make some sacrifice to relieve poverty and distress? True love is shewn by deeds, and not merely by words.

13. the world hateth you. Cf. John xv. 18, 19, xvii. 14; 2 Tim. iii. 12.

14. We know, &c. Cf. ii. 9-11.

we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in
death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: 15
and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding
in him. Hereby know we love, because he laid down 16
his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the
brethren. But whoso hath the world's goods, and be- 17
holdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in
him? *My* little children, let us not love in word, neither 18
with the tongue; but in deed and truth. Hereby shall 19

He that loveth not. A. V. adds 'his brother,' with some ancient authorities. The Christian would associate chiefly with brethren, and temptations to envy and malice would arise out of such intercourse; successful resistance to such temptations would prove the indwelling of the Divine life, which would lead to love of mankind as well as of the brethren.

15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. Cf. Matt. v. 21, 22.

no murderer hath eternal life. Cf. Gal. v. 21; Rev. xxi. 8.

16. Hereby know we love. Christ's sacrifice of himself is at once a revelation of perfect love, the love of God, and a standard for human love. Cf. John iii. 16.

17. the world's goods. The necessaries, comforts, and luxuries of material life. The word[1] translated 'goods' is rendered 'living' in the parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke xv. 12: 'He divided unto them his living.' Cf. ii. 16.

beholdeth: looks on unconcerned, or even with curious interest.

18. let us not love in word, neither with the tongue. Not merely with words that come only from the lips outward.

iii. 19-24. *How we may know that we are in Him.*

The consciousness of genuine love assures us that our lives are surrendered to the truth of the gospel; and, in spite of our consciousness of sin, enables us to rest in confident trust on the infinite resources of God's power and wisdom. But a good conscience, due to loyal obedience, enables us to lay our needs boldly before God, and to believe that He will satisfy them. His law is summed up in faith in Christ and love to man. The proof

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[1] *βίος.*

we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart
20 before him, whereinsoever our heart condemn us; because
God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.
21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness

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that we are in Christ, and he in us, lies in our obedience, and in our possessing his spirit.

19–21. The connexion of thought in these verses is very obscure and is matter of much controversy, into which we have not space to enter. Only the most probable interpretations are given.

19. Hereby. In the 'love . . . in deed and truth' inculcated in the previous paragraph, cf. verse 14. Some scholars[1], however, refer it to the power and knowledge of God mentioned in verse 20. According to the latter view, our assurance of salvation rests on God's 'efficacious grace,' an idea that does not spring naturally from the context.

shall we know. A. V., with some ancient versions, 'we know.'

we are of the truth. Our life is inspired by truth, especially by Christ who is the truth.

19, 20. shall assure (*lit.* 'persuade') **our heart before him, whereinsoever our heart condemn us.** Our hearts are distressed by the consciousness of sin, but this distress will be done away with, our hearts will be assured of forgiveness. If the literal rendering 'persuade' is taken, the context does not readily suggest what it is we are persuaded of. A. V. puts a full stop at 'him,' and begins a new sentence, 'For if our heart condemn us'; a rendering due to the omission, with some ancient authorities, of 'because' after 'condemn us.'

because God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. God's infinite power and knowledge assure us that His loving purposes will not be baffled by the waywardness of our hearts. The verse refers to Christians whose efforts after righteousness are hampered by their continued frailty. Cf. ii. 1, 2; the idea is the complement of that in 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

21. if our heart condemn us not. The thought of God's mercy and power reassures the penitent sinner, but the consciousness of growth in righteousness emboldens the believer in his fellowship with Him.

'To those who fall, how kind Thou art!
How good to those who seek!
But what to those who find? Ah, this
Nor tongue nor pen can shew.'

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[1] Holtzmann, &c.

toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, 22
because we keep his commandments, and do the things
that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his command- 23
ment, that we should believe in the name of his Son
Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he gave us
commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments 24
abideth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know
that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.
Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, 4

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22. we receive of him, because we keep his commandments. Obedience harmonizes our lives with God's purpose and methods, and we receive the blessings which spring from such harmony. Cf. v. 14; Mark xi. 24; John ix. 31, xiv. 13, xv. 7, xvi. 23, 24.

23. Cf. ii. 7, 8; John vi. 29.

24. hereby. Ambiguous, as in verse 19; it probably refers, as there, to the mutual love previously mentioned as the 'commandment'; what we thus know is that God abides in us through the Spirit. Others refer 'hereby' to the gift of the Spirit. The fact that we have received the Spirit enables us to know that God abides in us, i.e. the spiritual impulses of the Christian life to prayer, &c., assure us of the indwelling Divine presence. Cf. John xiv. 23, xv. 10; Rom. viii. 9.

iv. 1-6. *The false prophets.*

Not all who claim to speak by the Spirit are to be accepted; there are false prophets, apostates who have left the church for the world. The teacher who is inspired by the true Spirit may be known by the token that he teaches, that Jesus is both the Christ and true man; the true believer may be known by the fact that he is in fellowship with the Apostolic Church, verses 2, 6. For the false prophets deny the reality of the Incarnation, in the spirit of antichrist. You have defeated their attempt to dominate the church, and they have turned to the world, to which they properly belong.

1. prove the spirits: i. e. test the claims of those who profess to be inspired teachers; they may indeed have an inspiration, but it may be from Satan. The *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*[1], ch. xi, says, 'Not every one that speaketh in the spirit is a prophet, but only if he have the ways of the Lord;' and gives as the marks of the false prophet doctrines differing from those of the

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[1] Cf. p. 17.

whether they are of God: because many false prophets
2 are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit
of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ
3 is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which
confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the *spirit*
of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh;
4 and now it is in the world already. Ye are of God, *my*
little children, and have overcome them: because greater
5 is he that is in you than he that is in the world. They

Teaching—requests for money and exorbitant demands for hospitality. Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 3, 10; Rev. ii. 2.

false prophets. Cf. ii. 18; Matt. xxiv. 24; Acts xx. 30; 2 Pet. ii. 1; 2 John 7.

gone out: from the church.

into the world: in the limited and special sense of society outside the church, opposed to God and His people.

2. Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. An alternative reading, strongly supported, would give the rendering, 'confesseth Jesus, as Christ, come in the flesh.' The current false teaching, against which it was specially needful to protest, was a form of Docetism (Christ only *seemingly* incarnate), which denied that Christ became man, and asserted that he only assumed for a season the human body of Jesus. Cf. v. 1.

3. confesseth not Jesus. The Latin versions and Fathers read, for 'confesseth not,' a word[1] which R.V. marg. renders 'annulleth,' and Westcott explains, 'separates the divine from the human, divides the one divine-human Person.' A. V., with some ancient authorities, reads 'that Jesus is come in the flesh,' which is certainly the meaning.

this. The spirit which denies the Incarnation.

antichrist. Cf. ii. 18, 22.

ye have heard that it cometh. Cf. ii. 18; 2 Thess. ii. 7.

it is in the world. Here, as throughout the passage, 'world' is the world of evil men. Cf. verse 1.

4. have overcome them: i. e. the false teachers. The faithful believers, apparently, had successfully resisted their attempts to win the church to their errors. Cf. v. 4.

he that is in you. The Spirit of God or Christ.

he that is in the world. The spirit of Satan or antichrist. Cf. John xii. 31, xiv. 30, xvi. 11; 1 Cor. ii. 12; Eph. ii. 2, vi. 12.

5. Cf. John iii. 31, xv. 19, xvii. 14.

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[1] λύει.

are of the world: therefore speak they *as* of the world,
and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that 6
knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth
us not. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the
spirit of error.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; 7
and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and
knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; 8
for God is love. Herein was the love of God manifested 9
in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the
world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, 10

5, 6. the world heareth them . . . he that knoweth God heareth us. There was open opposition between 'them,' the false teachers, and 'us,' the true disciples of the apostles; and the true believer is known by his fellowship with 'us.' Cf. John viii. 47, x. 27; 2 Cor. x. 7.

6. the spirit of truth. Cf. John xiv. 17.

iv. 7–10. *Love, the token of sonship.*

But correct doctrine and church membership are only external signs; the essential characteristic of true religion is love. He that loveth is a child of God, and knows Him as only His children can; for God is love, and the source of love. He has shewn His love by sending His Son into an evil world to make atonement for its sins, and has thus called forth our love towards Himself.

7. that loveth: is in the habit of loving; has love for the guiding principle and ruling force of his life.

begotten of God. Cf. iii. 9.

8. knoweth not. More literally, 'knew not,' never attained to any real knowledge of God; 'has not known God.' Cf. iii. 6.

God is love. Cf. verse 16 and i. 5.

9. in us. R. V. marg., 'in our case.'

only begotten[1]. Only elsewhere of Christ in N. T., John i. 14, 18, iii. 16, 18; Paul (Rom. viii. 29, &c.; cf. Heb. i. 6; Rev. i. 5) speaks of Christ as 'first-born[2].' Cf. iii. 16; Rom. v. 8, viii. 32.

into the world. As before, the world of evil, alienated from and hostile to God.

that we might live through him. Cf. v. 11.

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[1] *μονογενῆ.*

[2] *πρωτότοκος.*

not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his
11 Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God
12 so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No man
hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another,
God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us:
13 hereby know we that we abide in him, and he in us,
14 because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have
beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the
15 Son *to be* the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall
confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in

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10. not that we loved God, but that he loved us. God's love was not suggested by any love on our part towards Him, but was original and spontaneous, the source of all other love. Cf. verses 19, 20; John xv. 16.

propitiation. See on ii. 2.

iv. 11–16. *Signs that we are in Him.*

Moreover, God's love, thus shewn, is the ideal to which we should strive to attain in our love to one another. Our mutual love assures us of the presence within us of the invisible God, whom we have seen manifested in Jesus. God abides in those who recognize that Jesus is the Son of God.

11. Cf. John xv. 12.

12. No man hath beheld God. Cf. John i. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 16. In the light of verse 20, the connexion seems to be that the most immediate outlet for love towards an invisible God will be His earthly children[1]. Cf. Matt. xxv. 40, 45.

his love is perfected. Cf. ii. 5. 'His love' may mean 'love to Him,' or 'love inspired by Him.'

13. because he hath given us of his Spirit. A fact shewn by mutual love, cf. iii. 24.

14. we have beheld and bear witness. Cf. i. 1, 2; John i. 14.

the Saviour of the world. Cf. John iii. 17.

15. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God. Cf. v. 5. Parallel to verse 2, ii. 22, 23, v. 1, but more distinctly emphasizing the Divine nature of Christ. God, whom no man hath seen, must be known through the Incarnation; and those who fail to recognize God in Jesus cannot know Him. Cf. Rom. x. 9.

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[1] So Holtzmann.

him, and he in God. And we know and have believed 16
the love which God hath in us. God is love; and he
that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in
him. Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may 17
have boldness in the day of judgement; because as he
is, even so are we in this world. There is no fear in 18
love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath
punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in
love. We love, because he first loved us. If a man say, 19, 20

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16. in us. R. V. marg., 'in our case.'

God is love. Also in verse 8.

abideth in God. So ii. 6, 28.

God abideth in him. So verse 12; the two 'abidings' are also combined in iii. 24.

iv. 17–21. *Love to God and man casts out fear.*

As regards the future, we can await the Day of Judgement in confidence, because we share with Christ and his church mutual love to one another, and a common hostility to the world of evil. This love, whose source is God, delivers us from all fear of punishment, and is the only true love. For, according to the express word of Christ, he who does not love his brother, and yet professes to love God, is a liar.

17. love made perfect with us: i. e. on our part, as A. V. 'our love.'

boldness in the day of judgement. Cf. ii. 28, iii. 19–21.

as he is, even so are we in this world. They share alike Christ's attitude towards the world of evil, his separation from its corruption, and the hatred of the world towards him. Cf. iii. 13, iv. 1.

18. fear hath punishment[1]. The context requires some such statement as, 'Fear springs from the consciousness that punishment is deserved, and from the expectation that it will be inflicted;' probably this is the general sense of the clause, although 'fear hath punishment' does not seem quite equivalent to this. Of course fear is in itself a form of suffering, and, when it arises from anticipated chastisement, is a foretaste of retribution. But this hardly seems to be the meaning of the Greek, neither does it suit the context. The words are somewhat obscure.

19. We love. Some authorities add 'Him' or 'God'; but the following verse requires the general statement.

because he first loved us. Cf. verse 10.

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[1] *κόλασις*, in the N. T., only here and in Matt. xxv. 46.

I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he
that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot
21 love God whom he hath not seen. And this command-
ment have we from him, that he who loveth God love
his brother also.

5 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is be-
gotten of God: and whosoever loveth him that begat
2 loveth him also that is begotten of him. Hereby we
know that we love the children of God, when we love
3 God, and do his commandments. For this is the love of

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20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. Our love to God, being inspired by God's love to us (verses 10, 19), cannot exist side by side with hatred of our fellow Christians. Cf. ii. 4, iii. 17.

he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, &c. Cf. verse 12.

cannot love. According to some ancient authorities, 'How can he love?'

21. this commandment. Cf. iii. 23.

his brother also. Love for the brother is the test of the profession of love to God; but the profession comes first, is the feature which the brethren have in common. If the profession is real, the common love to God, which draws the brethren together, will lead them *also* to love one another.

v. 1–5. *Love, obedience, and faith, signs of sonship.*

We know that we are the children of God when we recognize our elder brother, i. e. when we believe that Jesus is the Christ. If we love the Son, we shall love and obey the Father; and thus we shall know that we love His children. Obedience is not hard; for those who recognize Jesus as the Son of God have a faith which can overcome the world of evil.

1. Cf. iv. 2, 7; John i. 12, 13, xiv. 1, 9, 10, xv. 23.

2. we know that we love the children of God, when we love God (so far the converse of iv. 20), **and do his commandments.** The last two clauses form a single compound statement: 'if we love God, so as to obey Him.' As He wills the highest welfare of the brethren, such obedience will ensure both kindly feeling, and the wisest and most beneficent behaviour towards them. We shall be sure of loving them in the very best way.

do. A. V., with some ancient authorities, 'keep.'

3. Cf. ii. 5; Matt. xi. 30, and the next verse.

God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is be- 4
gotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the
victory that hath overcome the world, *even* our faith.
And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that 5
believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that 6
came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not with
the water only, but with the water and with the blood.
And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the 7

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4. **For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world.** God's demands are not unduly exacting, because He supplies the grace wherein we may satisfy them; may resist temptation; and may overcome the influences that try to hinder us. Cf. iv. 4; John xvi. 33.

our faith. The devotion and trust which the believer feels towards God. 'Faith' only occurs here in this Epistle.

5. Cf. iv. 15, v. 1.

v. 6–12. *The three witnesses.*

Jesus is the Christ who came by the water of baptism and the blood of the Passion; as to whom the Spirit, the water, and the blood unite in a threefold testimony; a Divine testimony far more credible than that of human witnesses. This testimony is to the effect that believers possess eternal life in Christ, and only in him.

6. **This is he.** The Apostle reminds his readers that the Jesus of whom he is speaking is Jesus of Nazareth, who was shewn by the circumstances of his life to be the Messiah.

water and blood: the Baptism and the Crucifixion. There is probably no reference to the flow of water and blood from his pierced side, John xix. 34.

not with the water only: in opposition to false teachers, who asserted that the Christ took possession of the human body of Jesus at his Baptism, and left it before his Crucifixion.

with the water (*twice*) . . . **with the blood.** R. V. marg., *Gr.* 'in[1],' for each 'with.' The water and the blood are thought of first as the means through which our Lord came into the full realization of his Messiahship, and then as representing the permanent conditions of his redeeming work, cleansing and sacrifice.

7. (A. V., 6.) **it is the Spirit that beareth witness.** The

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[1] ἐν; the Greek for 'by' (water, &c.) is διά.

8 Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness,
the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three
9 agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the

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inner witness of the Spirit comes to the spirits of those who can receive it, and through them to others. Cf. John xv. 26.

the Spirit is the truth. Elsewhere Christ is the truth, John xiv. 6.

8. (A. V., 7, 8.) **there are three who bear witness.** The appeal to *three* witnesses was suggested by the Jewish law requiring that a fact should be proved by 'two or three witnesses,' Deut. xvii. 6; cf. Matt. xviii. 16. 'The water' and 'the blood' symbolize the events of Christ's life, and the features of his character; and also the cleansing, inspiration (Acts ii. 38), and redemption which spring from his work. These also are a testimony to Christ.

the three agree in one: *lit.* 'the three are for or unto the one thing'; they unite in testifying to and establishing the validity of the claims of Christ.

This passage under the form in which it is found in the A. V. is famous as 'The Three Witnesses.' The A. V., verses 7, 8, runs 'For there are three that bear record [*in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth*], the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.' The words in brackets have no equivalent in the original Greek text. They are first found in Latin patristic writings, and were gradually shaped as an expository expansion of the text during the third, fourth, and fifth centuries; they were then inserted in MSS. of the Old Latin and Vulgate versions of the N. T. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries they were interpolated into two Greek MSS. of the Epistles, and into the Complutensian printed text of the Greek Testament. Erasmus omitted the words in brackets from the first edition of his Greek Testament, but promised to insert them if they could be found in any Greek MS.; hence when he met with the sixteenth-century MS. mentioned above he inserted them, and thus they found their way into the Textus Receptus, or received printed text, from which the A. V. was translated. Later still the words were interpolated in editions of the Syriac versions of the N. T. They are absent from all known Greek MSS. of the N. T., except those mentioned above, and a manuscript copy of the printed Complutensian text; from the original text of all the versions; from all the Greek Fathers, except a very few late writers who discuss Latin works containing the words; and from the early, and many of the later, Latin Fathers.

9. If we receive the witness of men. Cf. John v. 31–37, viii. 17, 18.

witness of God is greater: for the witness of God is this,
that he hath borne witness concerning his Son. He that 10
believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him:
he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because
he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne
concerning his Son. And the witness is this, that God 11
gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He 12
that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the
Son of God hath not the life.

These things have I written unto you, that ye may 13
know that ye have eternal life, *even* unto you that believe
on the name of the Son of God. And this is the bold- 14
ness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything
according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that 15

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the witness of God is this, that he hath borne witness, &c. The R. V. successfully reproduces the obscurity and ambiguity of the original Greek. The general sense is 'The witness of God, the sum and substance of revelation, is a testimony to Christ and his gospel.' The A. V., with inferior MSS., reads 'the witness of God, *which* he hath testified.'

10. the witness in him: the witness of the Holy Spirit to his spirit; and the testimony of the spiritual experiences which come through faith in Christ. Cf. verse 11.

11. eternal life. See on ii. 25.

this life is in his Son. Cf. iv. 9; John i. 4.

12. Cf. John iii. 36, v. 24.

v. 13-17. *Intercessory prayer.*

I write to you who believe that you may know that you have eternal life, and may pray with confidence that you will be heard. Yet there are limits to the intercession you may make for sinners; for some you may pray and obtain forgiveness, for others I cannot bid you intercede.

13. These things. Either the whole letter, cf. i. 1, 2, or what immediately precedes, verses 11, 12. Cf. John xx. 31.

have I written unto you. A. V. inserts after these words, with inferior MSS., 'that believe on the name of the Son of God.'

even **unto you that believe.** A. V. reads, with inferior MSS., 'and that ye may believe.'

14. boldness. Cf. iv. 17.

14, 15. If we ask in submission to God's will, we are sure that

he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have
16 the petitions which we have asked of him. If any man
see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask,
and *God* will give him life for them that sin not unto
death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this
17 do I say that he should make request. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.
18 We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth

He will listen to us; and that, when He listens, He will grant our request. Cf. iii. 22.

16. a sin not unto death . . . a sin unto death. These phrases are not explained by John, and are merely a particular application of the obvious practical distinction between different grades of sin. They have been the origin of infinite controversy, and are the source of the technical classification of sins as 'mortal' and 'venial.' A parallel distinction is drawn by our Lord, Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 29; Luke xii. 10, between other sins (including even blasphemy against himself), which may be forgiven, and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which cannot be forgiven. But the analogy is by no means close. A much more exact parallel is found in Heb. vi. 4–6, x. 26–29. In Hebrews the fatal sin is deliberate and ostentatious apostasy from Christianity; here, as we may gather from ii. 18, 19, iv. 1–6, it is a similar separation from the Apostolic Church[1]. Cf. 2 John 10, 11. 'Unto[2] death' is literally 'tending to death,' and does not necessarily mean that death will ensue—the sin may not be persisted in, the tendency may be checked before the result to which it tends is reached.

he shall ask, and God will give. R. V. marg., 'he shall ask and shall give.' Cf. Jas. v. 14, 15.

not . . . do I say that he should make request. Cf. Jer. vii. 16, xiv. 11.

17. unrighteousness[3]: wrong done to a fellow man. Cf. iii. 14.

a sin not unto death. A sin which does not lead to deliberate withdrawal of faith and obedience from Christ, to wilful abandonment of the attempt to live the Christian life, or to the avowed choice of a life of alienation from God. Cf. Num. xv. 29-31.

v. 18–21. *Concluding summary.*

Finally, we summarize the truths which this letter is intended to teach thus:—We know three things: (1) that the Christian life is moral; (2) that we, the fellowship of the Apostolic Church, are

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[1] Holtzmann. [2] πρός. [3] ἀδικία.

not; but he that was begotten of God keepeth him, and
the evil one toucheth him not. We know that we are 19
of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one. And 20
we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us
an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we
are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ.
This is the true God, and eternal life. *My* little children, 21
guard yourselves from idols.

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on God's side; and that those who oppose us are His enemies; (3) that the Son of God was incarnate in Jesus, and revealed to us the true God, and brought us into fellowship with Him.

Having this fellowship with the true God, we must utterly renounce all worship of idols.

18. sinneth not. Cf. i. 5—ii. 6, iii. 6-10.

he that was begotten of God. The tense[1] is different from that[2] translated 'is begotten.' R. V. understands the former of the Christian, the latter of Christ. Cf. below.

keepeth him: i. e. the Christian. A. V., with some ancient MSS., reads 'keepeth himself,' a reading which implies that 'he which was begotten' is the Christian. Cf. Jas. i. 27.

19. we are of God. Cf. iv. 4-6.

world. See ii. 2, iv. 1.

the evil one: Satan.

20. the Son of God is come. Cf. ii. 22, 23, iii. 8, iv. 9, 15, v. 1-5.

understanding[3]. Cf. 2 Pet. iii. 1.

him that is true, even **in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God.** This rendering identifies 'him that is true' with Christ, and makes the passage the most explicit N.T. assertion of the deity of Christ. Cf. John i. 1, xx. 28; Heb. i. 8. In other passages which seem explicit in A. V. or R. V., Acts xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Titus ii. 13, either the text or the translation is doubtful. See also on 2 Pet. i. 1.

But even here the 'his' suggests the interpretation, 'in him that is true, i. e. God, even as being in God's Son'—to be 'in Christ' is to be 'in God.' Thus 'the true God' refers to the Father, or to the Godhead generally. Cf. John xvii. 3.

For 'true[4]' see on ii. 8.

This is the true God, and eternal life. An elliptical way of saying 'This, he that is true, is the true God, who is to us eternal life,' verses 11-13; or perhaps, 'This knowledge is to us eternal life.'

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[1] Aorist. [2] Perfect.

[3] *διάνοια*, only here in the Johannine books.

[4] *ἀληθινός*.

21. guard yourselves from idols. 'Idols' are often taken figuratively for all objects of desire or affection which seduce men from loyalty to Christ. This is a true application of the clause to modern times; but in the original the word is literal, 1 Cor. x. 14. Idolatry still flourished when the letter was written, and Christians were tempted in many ways to enter into some compromise with it. Thus at the end of a letter dealing with errors taught by those who professed to be Christian teachers, the Apostle adds, by way of postscript, that his readers must also guard against idolatry.

A. V. adds 'Amen' at the end of this verse, with some inferior MSS.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF

JOHN

THE elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom 1
I love in truth; and not I only, but also all they that
know the truth; for the truth's sake which abideth 2
in us, and it shall be with us for ever: Grace, mercy, 3
peace shall be with us, from God the Father, and

1–3. *Salutation.*

The 'elder' and those like-minded with him greet 'the elect lady and her children' in the fellowship of the truth.

1. The elder. The Apostle John or, according to some, John the Presbyter[1].

The elect lady. Either an individual or a church[2]; cf. on 1 Pet. v. 13. 'Elect' refers to the Christian calling in either case.

her children. The members of the church, if that view be taken; or if the 'lady' is an individual, still the members of the church in which she was prominent.

1, 2. whom I love in truth . . . all they that know the truth; for the truth's sake. The 'truth' is the Christian faith as held by the Apostolic Church, in opposition to the adherents of the false teachers; cf. verse 7. This 'truth' is the bond between the writer and those in fellowship with him, and those whom he addresses. Cf. 1 John iv. 6; 3 John 1.

3. Grace, mercy, peace, &c. For the formula of salutation see on 1 Pet. i. 1.

shall be with us. A. V., with inferior MSS., 'be with you,' in imitation of the greetings in the Pauline Epistles.

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[1] pp. 84, 87.

[2] pp. 86 f., others 'the elect Kyria, or Electa Kyria.'

from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and
love.
4 I rejoice greatly that I have found *certain* of thy
children walking in truth, even as we received command-
5 ment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady,
not as though I wrote to thee a new commandment, but
that which we had from the beginning, that we love one
6 another. And this is love, that we should walk after his
commandments. This is the commandment, even as ye
heard from the beginning, that ye should walk in it.
7 For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, *even*
they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh.

Jesus Christ. A. V., with some ancient authorities, 'the Lord Jesus Christ.'

the Son of the Father: emphasizing, as in the Johannine books generally, the Divine sonship of our Lord.

4–11. *Warning against false teachers.*

Continue in love to one another, and in obedience to God, in spite of false teachers who deny the reality of the Incarnation. From such keep entirely separate. Hospitable customs and the ordinary courtesies of life must be dispensed with, lest you should be in any way associated in their sin.

4. I rejoice greatly. So Paul usually (Rom. i. 8, &c.) passes from the opening salutation to some commendation of his readers. Cf. 3 John 3.

I have found certain **of thy children walking in truth.** The writer had been visited by some members of the church to which he was writing, and had found that they and he were at one in their views of Christian truth. Cf. 3 John 3, 4.

we received commandment from the Father. This is partly explained in the next verse, though doubtless the commandment is thought of as embracing truth and love, i. e. the whole life of thought and action. Cf. 1 John iii. 23, iv. 21; John x. 18. It is received 'from the Father' through Christ; the phrase implies the right of Christ to speak for the Father, and claims that the writer's teaching, his form of the Christian message, rested on the authority of both the Son and the Father.

5. See on 1 John ii. 7, 8, iii. 11, 23.

6. See on 1 John ii. 5, 24, v. 3.

7. See on 1. John ii. 18–22, iv. 1–6. Verses 5–7 are almost a mosaic of phrases from the First Epistle.

This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves, 8
that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but
that ye receive a full reward. Whosoever goeth onward 9
and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God:
he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the
Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and 10
bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into *your*
house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him 11
greeting partaketh in his evil works.

Having many things to write unto you, I would not 12

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8. Look to yourselves, that ye lose (R. V. marg., 'destroy') **not the things which we have wrought.** The Christian life and faith of the readers were the work of the writer and those like-minded with him, i. e. of the apostles and their loyal disciples. The false teachers were men of influence and ability, and there was danger lest the readers should be led astray into errors which would ruin their spiritual life. Some ancient authorities read 'ye have wrought' (cf. Phil. ii. 12); with this reading the passage would mean that they were in danger of falling from the level of Christian life which they had reached, and of undoing the good effect of their influence on others. Cf. Gal. iii. 4; Heb. x. 36.

ye lose . . . ye receive. A. V., with inferior MSS., has 'we lose . . . we receive.'

9. goeth onward[1]**:** i. e. treats the Christian revelation as a mere stepping-stone to more advanced doctrine. The reference is to teachers who anticipated the Gnostics in asserting that they had gone beyond the apostolic faith, and penetrated to deeper mysteries. R. V. marg., 'taketh the lead,' i. e. grasps at authority and dignity in the church. Cf. 3 John 9. A. V. reads 'transgresseth[2],' with inferior MSS.

the teaching of Christ. Cf. John vii. 16, 17.

the teaching. A. V. adds 'of Christ,' with inferior MSS.

10. receive him not into your **house,** &c. Tradition states that John refused to remain under the same roof with the Gnostic Cerinthus.

12, 13. *Conclusion.*

I hope to visit you soon, and speak with you further. The children of the 'elect sister' greet the 'elect lady.'

12. Cf. 1 John i. 4; 3 John 13.

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[1] *προάγων.* [2] *παραβαίνων.*

write them with paper and ink: but I hope to come unto you, and to speak face to face, that your joy may be fulfilled.
13 The children of thine elect sister salute thee.

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13. thine elect sister. The 'sister' will be an individual or a church, according to the view taken of the 'lady'; and 'children' will be understood as in verses 1 and 4.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF

JOHN

THE elder unto Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth. 1
Beloved, I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper 2
and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For 3
I rejoiced greatly, when brethren came and bare witness unto thy truth, even as thou walkest in truth.

1. *Salutation.*

The 'elder' salutes Gaius.

1. The elder. See on 2 John 1 and pp. 87 f.

Gaius: a form of Caius, a Roman name as common as John Smith. In the N. T. Gaius is found as the name of 'a Macedonian,' Acts xix. 29; a man 'of Derbe,' Acts xx. 4; a Corinthian, Rom. xvi. 23 and 1 Cor. i. 14. There is no evidence to connect any of these with our Gaius. An early but doubtful tradition mentions a Gaius who was made bishop of Pergamum by John.

whom I love in truth. Cf. 2 John 1.

2-4. *Commendation.*

I rejoice in thy fidelity, and pray that thou mayest be as prosperous as thou art loyal.

2. A most unique testimony; how few men would wish that their spiritual condition should be the measure of their health and prosperity.

3, 4. I rejoiced greatly . . . my children walking in the truth. Cf. 2 John 4.

3. I rejoiced greatly, when brethren came and bare witness: i. e. on one special occasion. The R. V. marg., 'I rejoice greatly, when brethren come and bear witness,' implies that brethren were in the habit of passing to and fro between the elder and Gaius. The Greek[1] for 'rejoiced' or 'rejoice' is the same as in 2 John 4.

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[1] ἐχάρην.

4 Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children
walking in the truth.
5 Beloved, thou doest a faithful work in whatsoever thou
doest toward them that are brethren and strangers withal;
6 who bare witness to thy love before the church: whom
thou wilt do well to set forward on their journey worthily
7 of God: because that for the sake of the Name they
8 went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore

4. joy[1]. Some ancient authorities read 'grace[2],' i. e. the greatest gift God has given him is the fidelity to truth of his 'children,' i. e. disciples.

this, to hear of. (R. V. marg.) 'These *things*, that I may hear' is a literal rendering of the Greek, of which the R. V. text is the idiomatic English equivalent.

5–8. *In praise of hospitality.*

I hear of thy hospitality to Christian travellers; persevere therein.

5. them that are brethren and strangers: i. e. strange brethren, travelling Christians who would be dependent on the hospitality of their brethren in the towns they visited, especially the itinerant preachers, called by the *Teaching of the Twelve* 'prophets' and 'apostles,' for whose entertainment the *Teaching* gives full directions. Gaius's 'faithful work' had been such hospitality. A. V., following inferior MSS., reads 'to the brethren, and to strangers,' as if two classes were intended.

6. love. Not as A. V., 'charity.'

the church: to which the elder belonged.

whom thou wilt do well to set forward on their journey. The itinerant preachers were again visiting the church to which Gaius belonged, perhaps in company with the bearer of this letter. 'Set forward[3]:' 'the word implies both a friendly farewell and escort on the opening of a journey[4];' cf. Acts xv. 3, xx. 38.

worthily of God: regarding the help given as a service rendered to God. The phrase is common in pagan religious inscriptions (Deissmann, p. 248).

7. for the sake of the Name: of Christ; cf. Acts v. 41, R. V. A. V., in both passages, has 'his name,' with inferior MSS.

went forth: as itinerant preachers.

taking nothing of the Gentiles: probably refusing to accept hospitality from unconverted Gentiles, and therefore the more in need of entertainment from Christians. A visit to a ought to welcome such, that we may be fellow-workers with the truth.

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[1] *χαράν.*

[2] *χάριν.*

[3] *προπέμπειν.*

[4] Vaughan on Rom. xv. 24.

I wrote somewhat unto the church: but Diotrephes, 9
who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Therefore, if I come, I will bring to 10
remembrance his works which he doeth, prating against us with wicked words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and them that

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Gentile household involved contact with idolatry. The preachers would not wish to be under an obligation to the heathen whom they addressed; just as Paul declined help from many of the churches he founded, 1 Cor. ix. 18.

8. welcome: recognize them as Christian teachers, and give them hospitable entertainment.

such: itinerant preachers.

fellow-workers with the truth: either literally as co-operating with the truth, regarded as a force acting on men; or as an elliptical equivalent of 'fellow-workers with us and you in spreading the truth.'

9–11. *Denunciation of Diotrephes.*

I am coming to rebuke Diotrephes, who usurps authority and excludes true believers from the church. Do not imitate his wrong-doing.

9. I wrote somewhat: perhaps the Second Epistle, cf. p. 91, or some lost letter. Having addressed the church, as a church, in vain, he now writes to Gaius personally. A. V., with inferior MS., omits 'somewhat.'

the church: to which Gaius belonged.

Diotrephes: 'nourished by Zeus,' probably a convert from heathenism and a presbyter or bishop of his church; nothing else is known of him. The term 'Diotrephes' is found in Homer as an epithet of kings and nobles. Diotrephes must have been a leader of the party opposed to the elder; there is nothing in the letter to indicate the character of this party. The general situation implied in the General Epistles suggests that it may have consisted of forerunners of the Gnostics, but it may also have been purely local.

loveth to have the preeminence. Diotrephes was prompted by personal ambition and a masterful spirit; the elder does not charge his opponent with false teaching (but cf. on verse 12), but with personal enmity.

receiveth us not. He induced the church to which he and Gaius belonged to refuse to accept the letter mentioned in verse 9.

10. the brethren: the itinerant preachers from the elder's

would he forbiddeth, and casteth *them* out of the church.
11 Beloved, imitate not that which is evil, but that which is
good. He that doeth good is of God: he that doeth
12 evil hath not seen God. Demetrius hath the witness of
all *men*, and of the truth itself: yea, we also bear witness;
and thou knowest that our witness is true.

13 I had many things to write unto thee, but I am
14 unwilling to write *them* to thee with ink and pen: but
I hope shortly to see thee, and we shall speak face to
face. Peace *be* unto thee. The friends salute thee.
Salute the friends by name.

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church who attempted to visit the church to which Gaius and Diotrephes belonged. Diotrephes induced his church to refuse to acknowledge them, and even, apparently, to excommunicate them. He would not entertain, 'receive,' them himself, nor yet allow others to do so. In fact, he treated the elder's friends as the elder bade his followers treat members of the opposite party, 2 John 10.

11. Cf. 1 John iii. 6, 9.

12. *Demetrius commended.*

12. Demetrius: obviously not the Demetrius of Acts xix. 24; the name was a common one. Nothing else is known of this Demetrius: he may be mentioned as a conspicuous example of hospitality to the elder's friends in contrast to Diotrephes, or he may have been the bearer of the letter. In the latter case the very strong commendation of him was intended to help Gaius and overbear the opposition of Diotrephes, and secure a welcome from the church.

the truth itself: personified as testifying to Demetrius's loyalty to itself; perhaps hinting that Diotrephes had not been so faithful.

we: the elder and his followers. Cf. John xxi. 24.

13, 14. *Conclusion.*

I will not write more, for I hope to visit you, and speak further on these matters. Greetings.

13, 14. Cf. 2 John 12, 13.

14. The friends. Not a general term for church members, but = 'our friends,' those members in each of the two churches who were in sympathy with the elder, as opposed to the followers of Diotrephes. This verse suggests that the latter had friends in the church to which the elder belonged.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JUDE

JUDAS, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, 1
to them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and
kept for Jesus Christ: Mercy unto you and peace and 2
love be multiplied.

1–2. *Salutation.*

Jude greets his Christian readers as beloved of God and kept secure unto the coming of Jesus Christ, and prays that the Divine blessings they enjoy may be multiplied.

On the general form of the salutation see on 1 Pet. i. 1.

1. Judas: A.V., 'Jude.' The name in the original is identical with 'Judas' in Judas Iscariot; the 'Jude' of the A.V. avoided an unpleasant association. Judas (Ioudas) is the Greek form of the O.T. Judah, usually, but perhaps incorrectly, explained as 'praised' or 'praiseworthy.' Judah in the O.T. is the name of the tribe and nation, of the patriarch to whom the origin of the tribe was traced, and of various Jews of the post-exilic period. In the N.T. times it was a very common name, and was borne by several persons in the N.T. and Josephus; cf. p. 4.

a servant of Jesus Christ: so Jas. i. 1, which see.

brother of James: i.e. James the brother of the Lord; see pp. 12 f.

to them that are called. This description of the persons addressed does not occur in any other of the General Epistles, but is so used by Paul in the salutation of Rom. i. 6 and 1 Cor. i. 2. In Rom. i. 1 he applies the term 'called' to himself. The phrase denotes Christians as those who have heard and obeyed God's invitation to reconciliation and submission. On Rom. i. 6 Sanday and Headlam paraphrase it 'called out of the mass of mankind into the inner society of the church.'

beloved: A.V., 'sanctified,' with some inferior MSS.

kept for: A.V., less correctly, 'preserved in'; kept safely

3 Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the

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by the Father for Christ at his coming, which the early church regarded as always imminent. Thus, too, God's providential care keeps His people that they may attain to greater privileges, fuller blessing, and more effectual service in Christ; cf. 1 Pet. i. 5. Such prospects are held out to the readers that they may be encouraged to reject false teaching, and to remain faithful to Christian truth.

2. Mercy, &c.: an expansion of the greeting, 'Grace to you and peace be multiplied,' 1 Pet. i. 2; 2 Pet. i. 2, which see. The additional 'mercy' occurs in the immediate context, 1 Pet. i. 3, and in the greetings in 1 Tim i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 3. The letter of the church of Smyrna, giving an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, opens with a similar threefold blessing, 'Mercy, peace, and love of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied,' possibly based on this passage. For 'mercy' see on Jas. ii. 13. See also on 1 Pet. i. 1.

3, 4. *Reasons for writing.*

I have been eager and prompt to write to you about that salvation of which you and I are alike partakers, because I felt compelled to exhort and encourage you to brace yourselves afresh to yet more strenuous efforts for that truth which Christ committed once for all to his church. For the warnings of Christ and his apostles are being fulfilled, and there have crept in among you impious men, who deny our Master by finding a pretext for licentiousness in the liberty which they claim to have through the grace of God.

3. (2 Pet. i. 5[1].) **diligence:** zeal (*spoudē*), earnest desire and prompt and strenuous effort to realize it.

common salvation. Titus i. 4 speaks of the faith common to Paul and Titus.

exhorting: the word (*parakalōn*) includes the ideas 'exhort' and 'encourage.' Jude's readers were already on the right side; he wishes to help them to hold out against temptation and perhaps persecution.

contend earnestly: *lit.* 'contend further' (*epagōnizesthai*), i. e. strive afresh and with even greater energy than before. There are pauses for rest, 'times of refreshing' in the Christian warfare, but they are always followed by a renewed call to arms. As the

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[1] For comparison of parallel passages in Jude and 2 Peter see synopsis, p. 58, and commentary on 2 Peter.

saints. For there are certain men crept in privily, 4
even they who were of old set forth unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into

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Christian becomes more mature, greater claims are made upon him, and he needs to exercise to the full the larger measure of grace he has received.

the faith: here and in verse 20, the truths which are the object of our faith; so often in the Pastoral Epistles, 1 Tim. v. 8, &c., and perhaps Gal. i. 23. See also on Jas. i. 3.

once for all: there was no room for the innovations of 'the ungodly men' of the next verse. The principles of Christian truth and life were not a passing fashion, but permanent and irrevocable. Such verses as this, however, do not mean that Christians are always bound to use exactly the same terms and phrases, and practise just the same observances as the Apostolic Church. The essential principles are always binding, but the Holy Spirit guides each generation into an application and understanding of them suitable to its own needs.

With 3^b cf. Phil. i. 27, 'with one soul striving (as athletes) for the faith of the gospel,' and 2 Pet. ii. 21, which see.

the saints: Christians, the church.

4. (2 Pet. i. 1-3.) **certain men.** See on 1 John ii. 18.

of old set forth unto this condemnation. See on 1 John ii. 18; but possibly Jude has in mind a passage in the *Book of Enoch* (see on verse 14), 'Judgement will come upon them, because they believe in the lust of their body and have denied the spirit of the Lord,' lxvii. 10. The reference, however, may be more general, i. e. 'The men who are troubling you are the false teachers whose coming has long been foretold, and for whose sins there has been appointed the condemnation set forth in this letter.'

ungodly: a favourite word in Jude, verses 15, 18; see on 1 Pet. iv. 18.

turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness. Grace transferred the control of life from external rules, especially those of Judaism, to the indwelling spirit of love and devotion to Christ. This Christian liberty, which the ungodly claimed to possess, was made a pretext for following evil impulses; men professed to believe that these were due to that indwelling spirit. A similar perversion of truth constantly reappears in times of religious excitement, as for instance amongst the Anabaptists at the Reformation. For 'lasciviousness' see on 1 Pet. iv. 3.

denying: i. e. by their conduct. They did not formally repudiate Christianity; the serious danger of their example lay in the fact that they professed to be faithful Christians.

lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

5 Now I desire to put you in remembrance, though ye know all things once for all, how that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward
6 destroyed them that believed not. And angels which

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our only Master. A.V., following inferior MSS., adds 'God.' 'Master' (*despotēs*) implies a harsher and more absolute dominion than 'Lord' (*kurios*). '*Despotēs* . . . implies, on the part of him who uses it, a more entire prostration of self before the might and majesty of God than *kurios* would have done' (Trench, *Synonyms*, p. 95). *Despotēs* is used of the Father in Luke ii. 27; Acts iv. 24; Rev. vi. 10, and is so taken here in the R.V. marg., 'the only Master, and our Lord.' This view is probably correct; cf. 1 Tim. vi. 15, 'the blessed and only Potentate' (*dunastēs*), used of the Father. R. V. text, following the dependent passage, 2 Pet. ii. 1, couples 'Master' with 'Lord' as also referring to Christ. In 1 Pet. ii. 18, &c. (which see), it is used of the master of slaves.

5–7. *Ancient examples of the doom of the wicked.*
I would have you learn from history the certain doom of such men, from the example of the destruction of the unbelieving Israelites, from the eternal captivity of the fallen angels, and from the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose foul sins these men have imitated.

5. though ye know all things once for all: perhaps rather, 'I can remind you, because—to make this point once for all—you know the manifold examples which history furnishes to illustrate my warning.' A.V., with inferior MSS., reads 'this' for 'all things.' In 1 John ii. 20 the R.V. text has 'and ye know all things.'

the Lord. Some of the best MSS. read 'Jesus.' In 1 Cor. x. 4 Paul says that the rock from which water flowed was Christ, and the N. T. often transfers to 'the Lord' or 'Christ' what the O. T. says of God; but all analogy is against the supposition that Jude spoke of 'Jesus' as delivering the Israelites from Egypt. In Ecclus. xvi. 6–14, the certain punishment of the wicked is illustrated by the fate of the 'giants,' i. e. the fallen angels, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Israelites in the wilderness; cf. Heb. iii. 7–19.

6. (2 Pet. ii. 4.) **angels.** In the very obscure fragment, Gen. vi. 1–4, we are told that the 'sons of God' took wives of the 'daughters of men,' with disastrous results. From this the *Book of Enoch* developed an elaborate story of the fall of the angels through lust. *Paradise Lost* is an independent treatment of the

kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgement of the great day. Even as 7
Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication, and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire.
Yet in like manner these also in their dreamings defile 8
the flesh, and set at nought dominion, and rail at

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idea of the fall of the angels, based rather on Luke x. 18 and Rev. xii. 7, 9 than on this passage. There is hardly a phrase in this verse which is not found in a similar context in *Enoch*.

principality: *archē*, a term used in *Enoch* and Paul as a synonym for, or a special order of, angels; here = the heavenly status of the angels.

everlasting: *aidios*, sometimes taken as an adjective from *Hades*, the place of the dead, i.e. 'the bonds of Hades'; apparently 2 Peter, which has 'cast down to Tartarus,' understood *aidios* in this sense.

7. (2 Pet. ii. 6.) **in like manner with these.** Gross and unnatural immorality was the sin which brought about the ruin of Sodom and of the angels; and such, it is implied, was the sin of those whom Jude is denouncing.

the punishment of eternal fire: i.e. fire which wrought irrevocable destruction, and (according to ancient views as to the phenomena of the district) left conspicuous traces as permanent monuments of the Divine judgement. Josephus (*Jewish War*, iv. 8, § 4) says of the district of Sodom and Gomorrah, 'It is . . . now entirely burnt up . . . even to this day the relics of the Divine fire . . . are to be seen there.' But it does not seem that these supposed 'relics' are really traces of fire or volcanic action.

8–11. *Examples of the sin of railing.*

These ungodly men are not only licentious, but rail at constituted authorities. They neglect even such examples of self-restraint as that of Michael in his controversy with Satan, and follow in the footsteps of Cain, Balaam, and Korah.

8. (2 Pet. ii. 10.) **Yet:** in spite of the examples cited above.

in their dreamings: i.e. in their empty dreams of perverting Christian faith so as to justify insolent self-indulgence; the phrase qualifies all the rest of the verse.

dominion: *kuriotēs*, used by Paul, Eph. i. 21; Col. i. 16; and

9 dignities. But Michael the archangel, when contending

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by Origen, &c., of angels (so Lightfoot on Colossians). Hence this term here and the following.

dignities: *doxas*, *lit.* 'glories,' are usually taken to mean angels, perhaps regarded as the guardians of public decency. According to one interpretation they appear in that capacity in 1 Cor. xi. 10, which seems to say that women should be veiled at Christian services 'because of the angels.' But no instance is quoted of the use of *doxa* for 'angels.' It does not seem likely that blasphemy against angels would be so conspicuous a sin of licentious men as to call forth this emphatic condemnation. In Rev. ii. 1, &c., church officials are styled angels; etymologically *kuriotēs* is simply 'dominion.' Probably here, though used elsewhere for angels, it refers to the constituted authorities of the church (see also on verse 11). Men who wished to set at nought the principles of Christian morality and yet remain in the church, had no choice but to attack its actual leaders and teachers.

9. (2 Pet. ii. 11.) **Michael the archangel:** only mentioned elsewhere in the Bible in Dan. x. 13, 21, xii. 1, as the champion of Israel against the angelic champions of other nations, and similarly in Rev. xii. 7, as fighting for the saints against Satan. Michael plays a large part in Jewish and Christian apocalypses and in Rabbinical tradition. In Zech. iii. 1, 2 Satan appears as the accuser, and the angel of the Lord as the defender of Joshua the high priest; and the Lord says to Satan, 'The Lord rebuke thee.' This is sometimes supposed to be the incident referred to by Jude, 'the body of Moses' being a figurative term for Israel, like 'the body of Christ' for the church, and Israel being represented by Joshua. This view is most improbable in itself. Moreover, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and other Greek Fathers state that the incident is found in the Jewish apocalypse, known as the *Assumption of Moses.* According to Mr. R. H. Charles[1], this work was probably written in Hebrew between A.D. 7 and 29, and translated into Greek in the first century A.D. It is now extant only in a few quotations and references[2] in the Fathers, and in a large fragment of a Latin translation. The Latin fragment does not include the incident mentioned in this verse. The matter in dispute was whether Satan should carry off the body of Moses, or whether Michael should be allowed to bury it. Of course Michael prevailed. Jewish tradition describes a contest between Michael and Sammael, the angel of death, as to the soul of Moses.

The illustration is an *a fortiori* argument against the railing of the ungodly. 'If an archangel maintaining a good cause spoke with

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[1] *The Assumption of Moses*, p. xiii.

[2] Including those in Clement and Origen mentioned above.

with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing judgement, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these rail at whatsoever things 10 they know not: and what they understand naturally, like the creatures without reason, in these things are they destroyed. Woe unto them! for they went in the way 11

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courteous moderation to Satan, how heinous it must be for the ungodly, maintaining a bad cause, to rail at the authorities of the church.' The illustration suggests another application, which, however, does not seem to have been in Jude's mind, viz. 'If an archangel refrained from personal abuse of Satan, Christian controversialists should not rail at those who differ from them.' The strong language which Jude himself uses may at first sight suggest that he was more ready to commend the example of Michael to others than to follow it himself. But we must remember that Jude is not denouncing the 'ungodly' for differing from himself on obscure speculative doctrines, but for trying to find in Christian faith and privilege an opportunity and justification for gross immorality.

10. (2 Pet. ii. 12.) **whatsoever things they know not:** usually understood of the 'dominions' and 'dignities' of verse 8; either angels, because sensual men would not have the spiritual gifts by which they would know about angels; or church authorities whom they did not 'know' in the sense of recognizing. But this clause may generalize 8^b, 'they rail not only at persons above them in authority, but at truths above their knowledge,' the latter being Christian truths they were too gross and selfish to grasp. Nothing could be true or reasonable which *they* could not understand.

what they understand naturally. Like mere animals, they could only take in the physical pain and enjoyment and such material effects of actions, and so, through eagerness after the self-indulgence that seemed open to them, they brought about their own destruction.

11. (2 Pet. ii. 15.) **went . . . ran . . . perished.** These English tenses imply that the verse describes something that had already taken place; but the whole letter implies that the punishment of the 'ungodly' had not yet befallen them. Perhaps through the influence of a familiar Hebrew idiom, past tenses are used to express the certainty of a future event. 'They have followed in the footsteps of Cain,' &c., so much was past, 'and are irrevocably involved in their punishment.'

Cain differed from Abel in his mode of worship, and though

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[1] How is not clear, but this is plainly intended in the original narrative, and is assumed in all scriptural references to Cain.

of Cain, and ran riotously in the error of Balaam for
12 hire, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah. These
are they who are hidden rocks in your love-feasts when

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he was in the wrong[1] he killed his brother, just as the ungodly would gladly have killed Jude's friends.

ran riotously: *lit.* 'have been poured out,' used of spilt wine, Luke v. 37; of shed blood, Luke xi. 50; of God's love 'shed abroad in our hearts,' Rom. v. 3; hence perhaps 'ran riotously' like wine gushing out of a burst skin. R.V. marg., has 'cast themselves away through,' i. e. they became lost and ruined like spilt wine. The same Greek word is used in the translation of Ps. lxxiii. 2 for a Hebrew word meaning 'slipped.'

in the error of Balaam for hire. Balaam's most conspicuous sin was his willingness to earn money, the means for self-indulgence, by cursing God's people, another parallel to the 'railing' of the 'ungodly' and its motive. This may be in the writer's mind, but probably we should translate 'through the deceit of Balaam' by which he deceived Israel and deluded the people into immorality, Num. xxxi. 16. So Rev. ii. 14, 'Thou hast there,' at Pergamum, 'some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the Israelites, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication.' Perhaps we should render freely, 'They have come to ruin through being seduced by such rewards as Balaam sought for himself or offered to the Israelites.' Balaam claimed to be God's prophet, and sought to make sinful gain from his inspiration; just as the 'ungodly' turned God's grace into lasciviousness.

in the gainsaying of Korah: better through the gainsaying, &c., i. e. a gainsaying like that of Korah. The 'ungodly' attacked church officials as Korah challenged the authority of Moses and Aaron, Num. xvi.

12, 13. *Figurative description of the ungodly.*

Such men taint and mar the fellowship of Christians, as nature is disfigured by blight and rotting vegetation, by the seething ferment of foul waters, and the lurid glare of baleful meteors. Like these too their corruption is the more horrible because they have the form and profession of beneficence.

12. (2 Pet. ii. 13^b, 17^a.) **hidden rocks**: involving unsuspected peril of shipwreck of faith and character. But the Greek word, *spilades*, also means 'blemishes,' and is replaced in 2 Peter by a couple of words, *spiloi* and *mōmoi*, which certainly mean 'spots and blemishes'; so here the A. V. and R. V. marg., 'spots.'

love-feasts: only mentioned by name, *agapai*, here and in 2 Peter; but apparently the gatherings described in 1 Cor. xi.

they feast with you, shepherds that without fear feed

17–34 were love-feasts at which the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was observed. Tertullian, in his Defence of Christianity, addressed to the Roman Government, about A. D. 197, gives the following account of the love-feast, ch. 39, 'As it is an act of religious service, it permits no vileness or immodesty. The participants, before sitting down to supper[1], taste first of prayer to God. As much is eaten as satisfies the cravings of hunger; as much is drunk as befits the chaste. They say it is enough, since they remember that they must worship God even at night; they talk as those who know that the Lord is one of their hearers. After washing of hands, lights are brought in, and each is asked to stand forth and sing, as he can, a hymn to God, either one from the holy Scriptures or one of his own composing—a proof of the moderation of our drinking. As the feast began with prayer, so also it is closed with prayer.' But 1 Corinthians plainly tells us that at Corinth the love-feast had degenerated into a scene of riot and drunkenness. The enemies of the faith constantly alleged that the Christian love-feasts were occasions of vile debauchery; and it is to be feared that the Church of Corinth was not alone in affording some ground for such an accusation. These social meals, especially at a time when wine was a common drink, would be an opportunity for the self-indulgence which the 'ungodly' hankered after as one of the privileges of liberal-minded Christians. But, in their ordinary, legitimate form, these love-feasts served the same purpose as the modern tea-meeting. Some of the Methodist churches, in imitation of primitive practice, have social gatherings called love-feasts.

shepherds that . . . feed themselves: a reminiscence of Ezek. xxxiv. 8, 'The shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my sheep,' where, as usually in the O. T., the shepherds are the rulers, and the sheep, Israel. See on 1 Pet. ii. 25. The word used implies that the 'ungodly' set themselves up as teachers or church officials, and availed themselves of this position to live in luxury. Such proceedings were so common in the early church that the *Teaching of the Twelve*, chap. xi, lays it down that 'No prophet who orders a meal,' i. e. directs that a love-feast shall be held, 'in the spirit, eateth of it, unless indeed he is a false prophet . . . and if any one, [professing to speak] in the spirit, says, Give me money, or anything else, ye shall not hear him;' but to the true prophet, i. e. preacher, they were to give liberally, corn, wine, oil, bread and meat, money and clothing (chap. xiii).

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[1] *lit.* 'reclining,' the attitude in which the Greeks and Romans took their meals.

themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by
13 the roots; wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of

Such liberality would be a great opportunity for the plausible unctuousness of the 'ungodly.'

clouds, &c.: the figures emphasize the idea that the professions of the 'ungodly' held out a promise of spiritual helpfulness, which their practice wholly belied. They were like clouds coming up after a long drought, exciting hopes of rain, but carried away again by the wind.

autumn trees without fruit. The word for 'autumn' (*phthinopōrinos*, cf. our *phthisis*) is only found here in the N.T., and means the late autumn, as a time of withering. The 'ungodly' were like trees which should have borne fruit, but had not, and were now past all hope of it.

twice dead. Not only dead, without leaves, for that year, and capable of reviving and bearing fruit another autumn; but also dead in themselves, with no possibility of future life: often explained as figurative of the double death of body and soul, but only an emphatic way of saying that it was absolutely certain that these men would never be of any use whatever.

plucked up by the roots. As in verse 11, present sin and future punishment are combined in the same picture.

13. (2 Pet. ii. 17^b.) **wild waves,** &c.: a reminiscence of Isa. lvii. 20, 'The wicked are like the troubled sea; for it cannot rest, and the waters cast up mire and dirt'; cf. also Isa. iii. 9, 'They declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not'; and Phil. iii. 19, 'Whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame.'

wandering stars (*asteres planētai*): usually 'planets,' but generally understood here of comets, which for a time rush along an—apparently—erratic course and shine with great brilliance, but are soon lost for ever in the darkness of space[1]. The word *planētai* (wandering) was suggested by its similarity to *planē* (error) in verse 11, 'the error of Balaam.'

The stars in ancient times were often thought of as specially connected with angels, sometimes almost as angels. The wandering stars imprisoned in darkness are a parallel to the fallen angels and their doom. *The Book of Enoch* speaks of lack of rain, crops, and fruit, and of wandering stars 'in the days of sinners'; and refers to the imprisonment of the stars.

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[1] Many comets indeed return, but Jude would know nothing of this.

darkness hath been reserved for ever. And to these also 14
Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying,
Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy
ones, to execute judgement upon all, and to convict all 15
the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they

14–19. *The arising of the 'ungodly' a fulfilment of prophecy.*
Enoch prophesied that the Lord would come to punish ungodly men for ungodliness and blasphemy. These self-indulgent men, who rail at the authorities of the church, and curry favour with wealthy men for the sake of their money, are the fulfilment of this prophecy. The apostles also prophesied that in the last times there should be mockers, living according to their own ungodly lusts. These sensual, unspiritual men, who set one party in the church against the other, are the fulfilment of this prophecy.

14. Enoch . . . prophesied, saying. The rest of verses 13, 14, is a loose and abbreviated quotation from the *Book of Enoch*, a collection of apocalypses written in Hebrew or Aramaic between B. C. 95 and A. D. 70. In these apocalypses Enoch narrates various visions, including, amongst other things, the events of history from Adam to the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah. It is quoted as Scripture in the *Epistle of Barnabas*[1]. It is extant in an Ethiopic version, and in portions of a Greek version.

The use made of the *Book of Enoch* in this Epistle raises a difficulty as to the canon, or contents of the Bible. It has been argued that because Jude recognizes the *Book of Enoch*, either the latter should be included in, or the former excluded from, the Bible. But the fact is simply part of the evidence which shews that the canon of the O. T. was not fixed[2] by the N. T., but, like the canon of the N. T. itself, by the Christian Church.

seventh: the sacred number, as in the case of the sabbath, the year of jubilee, &c.

came: in the vision of the last day seen by Enoch.

the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones: borrowed from Deut. xxxiii. 2, the blessing of Moses; the 'holy ones' are the angels.

15. Notice how the *Book of Enoch* harps upon the word 'ungodly,' and thus probably suggested it to Jude as a suitable epithet for those whom he is denouncing.

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[1] Mistakenly ascribed to him.

[2] As far as it ever has been fixed, the Romanist O. T. still containing books rejected by Protestants.

have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which
16 ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are
murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts (and
their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*), shewing
respect of persons for the sake of advantage.

17 But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have
been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus
18 Christ; how that they said to you, In the last time there

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16. (2 Pet. ii. 18.) **murmurers.** This verse is clearly intended to identify the 'ungodly' of verse 15 with the men against whom he writes. Murmurs against the heads of the church were really 'hard things' said 'against' the Lord their Master, who had inspired them. So, when Korah attacked Moses and Aaron, Moses said, 'Thou and all thy company are gathered together against Jehovah: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?' (Num. xvi. 11.) So Ignatius wrote, 'All of you follow the bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery the apostles, honour the deacons, as you would the command of God' (*To Smyrna*, viii). When teaching is inspired by the Holy Spirit, to attack the teacher is to assail God Himself. 'Saul, Saul,' said the Lord, 'why persecutest thou me?' (Acts ix. 4.)

complainers: *lit.* 'finding fault with their lot in life.'

their mouth, &c. When it was safe to do so, they blustered, and bullied, and played the superior person, but they cringed to rich men, and flattered them for the sake of dinners and presents.

17. (2 Pet. iii. 1, 2.) **spoken before by the apostles:** apparently implying that the author was not an apostle, and that he wrote when their preaching was a thing of the past.

18. (2 Pet. iii. 3.) **how that they said.** The N. T. does not contain any apostolic saying couched in exactly these words; the verse is probably a summary of more detailed teaching often repeated. 'Said' (*elegon*) means, strictly, 'were in the habit of saying'; cf. on 1 John ii. 18.

to you. The churches addressed had, therefore, been ministered to by the apostles.

In the last time. The early church looked for a speedy close of the Christian era by the second coming of Christ; the years immediately before this would be 'the last time.' The period when the 'ungodly' and 'antichrists' came upon the scene was, however, really a 'last time'; their appearance marked the close of the first great Christian epoch, that of special inspiration. They were the most obvious symptoms that the

shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts.
These are they who make separations, sensual, having 19
not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves 20

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tide of spiritual force had begun to ebb, and that a reaction had set in, through which selfish and worldly motives would gain a foothold in, and sometimes control, the church itself.

mockers. Those who 'railed' and 'blasphemed' would naturally pass to derision through their insolent assurance.

19. These are, &c.: identifying the 'ungodly' with the 'mockers' of the previous verse.

they who make separations: the A. V., following inferior MSS., 'separate themselves.' The meaning of the phrase is much disputed. It is stated that the word for 'make separations' (*apodiorizō*) only occurs once elsewhere in the whole range of Greek literature, viz. in a passage in Aristotle, where it means 'mark off by defining.' Hence it has been understood here as 'those who indulge in a subtle casuistry of immoral definitions, and—in the light of the following words—distinguish the 'natural' man from the 'spiritual,' and claim as 'spiritual' men to be superior to the moral conventions which are binding on the ordinary natural man. This would be a perversion of Paul's teaching as to the liberty of the spiritual man from the Mosaic law. 'The spiritual man,' they may have said, in the words of 1 Cor. ii. 15, 'is judged of no man.' Paul himself had found it necessary to guard against such abuse of his teaching in Rom. vi.

But the simpler word *diorizō*, in classical Greek both to 'separate' and to make 'definitions,' occurs in the Greek version of Lev. xx. 26, in the sense of 'separate,' 'I have separated you from the nations.' Hence the compound word has been taken here as 'those who separate themselves'; but the sin of these men consisted partly in their attempt to be in the church and make as much out of it as they could.

As elsewhere, one feature of their iniquity always is their abuse of the powers of earth, or heaven, or both; and as they have been compared to Korah who stirred up sedition against Moses, it seems best to follow the R. V., 'make separations,' i. e. their attacks upon church authorities divided the community into parties siding with them and against them.

sensual: A. V., 'natural' (*psuchichoi*). See on Jas. iii. 15.

Spirit (*Pneuma*). See on 1 Pet. iii. 18.

20-23. *Application.*

These examples from history and these warnings will guide you in your own life, and shew you how to treat the ungodly. As to yourselves, build up your character on the foundation of

21 on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep
yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of
22 our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some
23 have mercy, who are in doubt; and some save, snatching

your faith; not only pray, but let the Holy Spirit inspire your prayers; commit yourselves to the safe-keeping of the Father, and persevere in the expectation of enjoying the loving-kindness of Christ—that so you may obtain eternal life. As for the ungodly[1] and those who are deluded by them, expose and punish those who promote disorder in the church; save those whom you can snatch from their influence, as from a consuming fire; and let your compassion watch for an opportunity of helping others; but be careful lest, through your sympathy with their wretchedness, you become in any way tainted with their impurity.

20. building up yourselves. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 10, &c., speaks of building upon the one foundation, Christ; the idea here is the same. The 'most holy faith' is the object of faith, the person and work of Christ. On this they were to build character and a spiritual life, partly, no doubt, through mutual conference and encouragement.

20, 21. Notice the two parallel sets of three, the Holy Spirit, the Father, Jesus Christ; faith, love, mercy.

mercy. See on verse 22.

unto eternal life might be connected with 'keep yourselves' or with 'mercy'; or, as Jude has not shewn clearly what he meant it to qualify, we may suppose that this was the hope and object to which all the exhortations in verses 20, 21 were directed. For 'eternal life' see on 1 John i. 2.

22, 23. These two verses are given very differently in the various MSS. and versions, and we cannot be certain what it was that Jude originally wrote. The A. V., following inferior MSS., has 'And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating,' &c. The R. V. text, '*And on some have mercy, who are in doubt; and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating,*' &c. follows the two oldest MSS., the Sinaitic (א) and the Vatican (B). Instead of the first 'have mercy,' the Alexandrian MS. (A) and Codex Ephremi (C) have 'convict.'

22. some . . . who are in doubt (*diakrinomenous*): R. V. marg., 'while they dispute with you.' *Diakrinomenos* is used in Jas. i. 6, &c., in the sense of 'being in doubt'; but in Jude 9 in that of 'disputing,' and therefore probably in that sense here.

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[1] But see notes on verses 22, 23.

them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Now unto him that is able to guard you from stum- 24
bling, and to set you before the presence of his glory
without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our 25
Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty,

The paraphrase given above is based on the translation, 'And some convict as disputers'; &c. as the R. V. Another rendering is, 'And some convict, who are in doubt'; &c. as the R. V.; i. e. those who hesitate may be recovered by shewing them their true position; others, more deeply involved, must be rescued by prompt and strenuous efforts; others are beyond the reach of any active intervention, but may yet be objects of compassion, and, therefore, if opportunity offers may be encouraged to repent and hope for forgiveness.

23. snatching them out of the fire . . . the garment spotted by the flesh: perhaps reminiscences of Zech. iii. 2, 3, 'Is not this [the high priest Joshua] a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments.'

hating, &c. Even in our anxiety to rescue sinners we must not dwell unduly on the details and circumstances of their sin, lest our own minds become tainted. Tennyson writes of Geraint:

'There fell
A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,
Through that great tenderness for Guinevere,
Had suffered, or should suffer any taint
In nature.'

24, 25. *Doxology.*

To Him who can keep you from being tripped up by the temptations which now assail you, and from being defiled by the impurity that seeks to thrust itself upon you, and can bring you out of the present trouble and humiliation with exceeding joy into the presence of His glory; to the one God our Saviour, as there ever has been, even before all time, so may there be now, and unto all eternity, glory, majesty, dominion, and power, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The closing doxology of Rom. xvi. 25-27 also begins and ends, 'To him that is able to stablish you . . . to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen.'

25. God our Saviour: a favourite phrase in the Pastoral Epistles, also in Luke i. 47.

through Jesus Christ; either 'our Saviour, through Jesus dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. Amen.

Christ,' or (as in paraphrase) 'glory, &c., ascribed through Jesus Christ.'

before all time, . . . for evermore: *lit.* 'before every age . . . unto all the ages.'

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